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The acculturation process for kaigaishijo: A qualitative study of four Japanese students in an American school

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THE ACCULTURATION PROCESS FOR *KAIGAISHIJO*
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF FOUR JAPANESE STUDENTS
IN AN AMERICAN SCHOOL

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Education
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

Linda F. Harkins

May 1998

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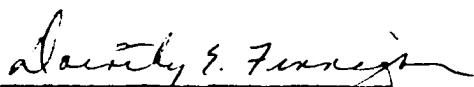
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Researching and writing this dissertation has largely been a solitary experience. At times, I have thought that I have learned more about myself and the way I perceive the world than about the acculturation process under scrutiny.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to sort out and specify the dimensions of acculturation for *kaigaishijo*, Japanese sojourning students who presented an anomaly in a monocultural setting, based on factors that surfaced through data collected in the interviews and observations as a result of my conceptual framework that focused on the family, educational environment, and maturity. By sorting the data and comparing and contrasting one child's experiences to those of others as individuals and as an aggregate, nine factors appeared to repeatedly impact the process of acculturation. Elements of two of the three original concepts that organized my thinking, interviewing, and observations, that is, family and school, played significant to moderate roles in the acculturation process of all four students of the study. The children, according to information gleaned from their parents, teachers, and school records, had met appropriate maturational milestones; therefore, the concept of maturation did not impact in these cases. Specific elements from the familial and educational environments did, however, impact the process. Two factors directly pertaining to the individual children's social and psychological make-up rendered significant consequences in the process.

The nine common factors isolated in the study do not appear to influence the process of acculturation with equal weight. Some constitute a more salient role than others. Three factors appear to play a minor role in acculturation, four appear moderately

important, and two factors, personality and a receptive attitude, display the greatest importance.

The study was conducted in a Middle Atlantic state where the author was a school administrator. The author drew from research in bilingual and multicultural education, art, linguistics, gifted education, cultural anthropology, sociology, educational psychology, and personality studies. It was concluded that numerous variables impacted the process and that each child's story was varied and complex. The findings should raise consciousness levels regarding the need to dispel stereotypes and to acknowledge differences as means to understanding and accepting diversity.

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x

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CHAPTER 1

The Phenomenon of *Kaigaishijo* in an American School

The recent influx of Japanese nationals into areas of the United States of America that attract Japanese industry presents a special area of research interest to educators and anthropologists alike. Unlike most immigrants, this population expects to return to Japan when overseas assignments are accomplished. Mid-career Japanese businessmen, agents of international economic expansion in the trend toward the globalization of business, are involved in overseas assignments in the areas of banking, manufacturing, and trading. When a 1987 survey (Goodman, 1990) revealed that Japanese businessmen felt they could only accept a maximum two-year assignment away from their families, many of their companies began to encourage them to bring their wives and children with them on extended assignments. The length of the overseas assignment depends upon the company's international needs (T. Nagano, personal communication, 1995).

When a Japanese family is uprooted from its native culture for more than two years, the children are the family members most impacted by the changes. In her study of Japanese children attending California schools, Minoura (1979) postulates that the psychological strain of living within two cultural contexts is more difficult for children between the formative ages of 11 and 13 than for younger children. Japanese parents are especially anxious not to keep their children overseas beyond elementary school age

because of the lack of Japanese senior high schools abroad (Goodman, 1990). High school academic training is essential for entrance into the best Japanese universities. Most Japanese parents believe and transmit to their children that one has to graduate from a good Japanese university to succeed in Japanese society (Azuma & Hess, 1991; Hendry, 1996).

Kikokushijo, a word invented by the Japanese Ministry of Education, describes returnee children of Japanese business persons on overseas assignments. The categorical term *kikokushijo*, literally meaning “to come back to one’s home country,” includes all “Japanese children under the age of 20 who, because of one or both of their parents’ jobs, have at some time in their lives spent at least three months overseas, and have returned to continue their education” (Goodman, 1990, p. 15). For *kikokushijo*, prolonged exposure to other cultures makes it difficult to conform to native cultural patterns upon returning.

A former *kikokushijo*, Atsushi Furuiye (1997), believes that twenty years ago *kikokushijo* were considered to be misfits in need of medical or psychological treatment upon their return to Japan. He remembers when female *kikokushijo* were idolized in the media as modernized girls. Today the phenomenon is not as unusual as it once was. *Kikokushijo*, although different after their experiences in America, are no longer treated as oddities. Many *kikokushijo*, in order not to be stigmatized, may even try to hide the fact that their exposure to Western culture makes them different from Japanese who have always lived in Japan.

The Ministry of Education in Japan recently coined another term for Japanese children living abroad with their parents who are international business persons or

scholars. Specifically, *kaigaishijo* are children of mandatory education age (6 to 15 years) who live in a foreign country for more than three months (Furuiye, 1997).

Technically, children are not labeled *kikokushijo*, until their official return to residence in Japan. Therefore, in this study to use the most accurate terminology, I refer to the students who are living in the United States as *kaigaishijo*.

Incorporation of a cultural meaning system, a personal interpretation of behaviors, values, and symbols, as a frame of reference for interpersonal behavior is part of socialization. Unless people are exposed to another culture, they are usually unaware of the cultural processes that direct life within a given society. The cultural self gradually emerges between the ages of 9 and 11 and children crossing a boundary at this period can switch their behavior from the Japanese pattern to the American one, or vice versa, with relatively little psychological strain (Minoura, 1979). Flexibility of the cultural self during this period is sufficient to permit adaptation to another cultural system, or what Minoura (1979) refers to as "cultural grammar," a concept that encompasses the cultural meaning system of the host society. Older preadolescent children have more difficulty adapting to cultural differences than younger preschool children. What Japanese children are taught is "a code of behavior acceptable to the Japanese tribe and its component groups" (Christopher, 1983). A Japanese student who does not know the *kata*, or correct way of behaving in a particular situation, may undergo psychological distress (Christopher, 1983). When Japanese students encounter problems for which there is no agreed-upon solution or they do not know the cultural solution, "they can be handicapped by their lack of a set of principles that are independent of time, place and cultural

context" (Christopher, 1983, p. 72). The phenomenon of *kaigaishijo* attending public school in the Middle Atlantic region provides an invaluable opportunity for me to assess the process of acculturation, that is, adapting to but not assimilating into a second culture.

One of the greatest differences between Japan and the United States pertains to norms and patterns for interpersonal behavior (Christopher, 1983; Honigmann, 1967; Minoura, 1979). Americans tend to be straightforward, individualistic, often demonstrative, and sometimes impulsive in their behavior. In contrast, to harmonize with the group is the goal of every Japanese. Instead of asserting their individualism, Japanese children learn to conform. Reinforcement for conformity in Japan's educational system comes through good grades and the approval of parents, teachers, peers, and community (Kitano, 1976).

At the core of what seems to be an indirect process of character formation is the Japanese *amae* syndrome. *Amae* has no literal English translation but encompasses the Japanese concept of self. It means fitting in and cooperating and never intentionally standing out or drawing attention to oneself (Christopher, 1983; Minoura, 1979). In the Japanese mind, if one harmonizes with the group, s/he will be loved and rewarded without having to ask for anything.

Japanese behavior is governed by a notion of reciprocity or "the idea that people are not good or bad in any absolute sense but good or bad in light of their relationship with others" (Christopher, 1983, p. 71). Piers and Singer (1971) explain that this psychological attitude is apparent in Japanese child-rearing practices that promote social conformity through shame. Christopher (1983) confirms that the typical Japanese mother

induces a sense of shame by forgiving her children when they disappoint her in any way. Unlike the conformity that is achieved through a highly individualized sense of guilt in Western culture, shame is an external sanction imposed on Japanese children by their mothers when children fail to live up to their parents' ideals.

Those Japanese with experience outside Japan are under no illusion that Westerners share their preference for harmony and group identity. Some *kikokushijo*, after exposure to the individualist mentality, however, experience difficulty fitting in upon their return to Japan. The only current solution to the dilemma appears to be international schools established by the Japanese Ministry of Education (Goodman, 1990). In terms of *Nihonjinron*, or "Japaneseness," Japanese children who are part of the trend toward globalization of the economy and have lived in the West can lose their sense of group identity and become too individualistic to fit into Japan's social hierarchy (Goodman, 1990).

Minoura (1979) concludes that the adoption of a cultural meaning system is age-linked and strongly influenced by factors outside the family. Her work comes under the personality-and-culture category whereby culture is seen to influence personality formation. She analyzes the socialization environment, language acquisition and proficiency, and age of entry in her study of the acculturation process of Japanese students. These students acquire behavioral patterns and systems of meaning that facilitate their participation in Western society. Her research on the acquisition of cultural identity among Japanese students temporarily residing in California, studies the phenomenon relevant to what she describes as "the cultural grammar of interpersonal

relationships” (Minoura, 1979, p. 390). I propose that acculturation provides a more accurate frame of reference than cultural grammar to describe the multidimensional process in which these students are engaged. Assimilation is a process of adapting to, blending in, and accepting the host culture. *Kaigaishijo* do not assimilate during their temporary residency in America.

Preschool children, who are too young to recognize differences between cultures, experience relatively little discomfort when moving into a culture that is different from the one into which they were born. However, when preadolescent children recognize cultural differences and incorporate language and other symbols of the host culture into their self concepts and cultural repertoire, they are experiencing acculturation. Acculturated individuals are able to share interests, aversions, preferences, and understandings with members of the host group. Acculturation does not entail exchanging what has been passed from parents for something entirely different. Acculturated persons need not accept as their own what Csikszentmihalyi (1996) refers to as *memes* of the host culture. “Languages, numbers, theories, songs, recipes, laws, and values are all memes that we pass on to our children so that they will be remembered” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, p. 7). Spending a large portion of their day with American students in school, Japanese students between the ages of 8 and 11 adopt American cultural grammar and culturally identify with American peers (Minoura, 1979).

The Japanese child, growing up within her/his own culture, acquires a culture-specific self-concept and "undergoes a process of socially guided emotional specialization" (Geertz, 1974, p. 249). To paraphrase Honigmann (1967), the emerging

personality within a culture predicts a relationship between early childhood experiences which establish skills and knowledge essential to coping patterns and adult behavior. Therefore, when a person is enculturated in one culture and grows to be an adult, life is somewhat predictable. Life can be confusing, however, for the Japanese child who is suddenly placed in an American school in which s/he understands neither the language nor the cultural expectations.

Following social rules guarantees security and conformity in Japan (Benedict, 1946; Christopher, 1983; Goodman, 1990). "Probably the single most important thing to know about Japanese is that they instinctively operate on the principle of group consensus" (Christopher, 1983, p. 53). Alien as this concept is to Western individuality, behavior that identifies Japanese with groups promotes harmony in social relations. To establish and maintain harmonious relationships, Japanese teach and model for their children the principles of reciprocity and hierarchy. Essentially, the child is trained to put himself into another's shoes before s/he acts. Hierarchical distinctions, according to the Japanese, promote harmony; these distinctions are emphasized in polite language especially in intergenerational living arrangements (Hendry, 1996). Hierarchical relations in the Japanese home, at school, and in the neighborhood guide Japanese children in their understanding of age, role, duty, and privilege. An understanding of these relationships prevents confusion.

In any discussion of the Japanese personality the famous proverb that "the nail that sticks up gets pounded down" always surfaces (Christopher, 1983; Goodman, 1990; White, 1987). Individualism is not a behavioral option when the child begins

kindergarten. The cooperative individual demonstrates that s/he understands not only the *kata* for a particular context but also the important concepts of *tatemae*, one's external or public face, as distinguished from *honne*, one's true feelings, thoughts, or intentions. When a Japanese student moves to the United States during the intermediate grades, that student adjusts certain contours of her/his interactions while acculturating or taking on aspects of the new culture. Japanese students beyond the age of 11 who have been schooled in group goals and harmonious cooperation find it more difficult than younger children to acquire the Western cultural grammar of individualism (Minoura, 1984).

People live their lives within the culture in which they are born and take their cultural meaning systems for granted; the systems are tightly embedded in daily transactions. When Japanese students live temporarily in America with its different cultural expectations, some students more readily recognize and incorporate the new cultural norms into their lifestyles than others. Successful adaptation to the host culture "consists mainly in acculturation, measured by the ability of the group to share and follow the values, goals, and expected behaviors of the majority" (Kitano, 1976, p. 3). When *kaigaishijo* find themselves thrust into a culture of individualism, it appears that they must identify with a different value system to successfully acculturate. As *kaigaishijo* take on the new culture, not only must they adapt to new values and behavioral standards, but they must also acquire a new language and learn new patterns of social interaction that stress individuality instead of harmony with the group. Why do some *kaigaishijo* more readily adapt than others?

Kaigaishijo who successfully acculturate appear to use the strategy of

accommodation as they adapt to their new surroundings and circumstances. In fact, a father of one Japanese student shared that he thinks accommodation is a natural part of the acculturation process, comparing it to an ancient Buddhist saying: “Go where the river flows.” Historically, Japanese students “like a stream...have followed the contours of the land, followed the lines of least resistance, avoided direct confrontation, and developed at their own pace, always shaped by the external realities of the larger society” (Kitano, 1976, p. 3).

Statement of the Problem

The phenomenon of *kaigaishijo*, Japanese children in this country because of their parents' jobs, compels students to learn and live temporarily within a cultural context different from their native culture. It also requires American educators to meet the needs of these students. One strategy to enable second-language students to overcome their limited proficiency in English is the tutorial ESL program. The language barrier appears to present the initial, if not the greatest, problem for the Japanese students. The Japanese father is usually the one family member who speaks English fluently. He is, however, frequently away due to business demands. *Kaigaishijo* are totally immersed in English at school but have little opportunity to practice speaking the target language (TL) at home. Families report that Japanese, not English, is spoken in their homes.

Japanese students are bridging two cultures while learning to speak, read, write, and understand two unrelated languages requiring different cerebral functioning (Goodman, 1990). The difficulty is exacerbated by the fact that Japanese differs from English in three ways: written, spoken, and symbolic conventions. First, *kaigaishijo* are

taught in Japanese Saturday school the Japanese syllabaries, including ideographic *kanji*, pictographs borrowed from the Chinese language. Fifteen years ago, Christopher (1983) suggested that *kanji* is processed in the brain's right hemisphere while the Latin alphabet or *romaji*, as the Japanese call it, supposedly is a left-brain function. With "nearly 50,000 different characters" representing different concepts or objects, Japanese is "quite certainly the most difficult system of written communication in general use in the contemporary world" (Christopher, 1983, pp. 40-41). Second, certain phonemes, or speech sounds, are not the same in English and Japanese. For example, the fact that the consonants "l" and "v" are missing from the Japanese alphabet presents problems in English pronunciation. Despite the language differences, children, aided by an innate language acquisition device that functions more weakly in adults, seem generally more easily to overcome the language barrier than adults (Bley-Vroman, 1989).

Throughout the school week Japanese students are taught American concepts for organizing their thoughts. They observe in the American public education system Western values of individualism and democracy that challenge and reshape their moral universe. Each Saturday they attend a Japanese school where they continue to learn about their own culture through language, accelerated mathematics classes, and seasonal activities that feature values and customs that emphasize conformity and the importance of the group. The value of concession and good will promoted at Saturday school contrasts sharply with personal responsibility taught in American classrooms. Japanese distaste for explicit statement and their dread of confrontation inhibit students, even if they attain adequate fluency in English, from engaging "in the kind of lucid, logically

structured exposition that is basic to effective debate and persuasion in a Western context" (Christopher, 1983, p. 180). *Kaigaishijo*, one product of Japan's internationalization, need to balance the traditional Japanese concepts of homogeneity, consensus, and groupism on the one hand with Western heterogeneity, creativity, and individualism on the other.

The primary burden of this study is to identify *kaigaishijo* patterns of acculturation based on family situation, educational circumstances, and maturation experienced by preadolescent Japanese nationals in the intermediate grades of an American school in the Middle Atlantic region. Although preadolescent Japanese students may be aware of some cultural differences when they attend school in America, they are more likely to bridge the two cultures than older adolescents who have been thoroughly socialized in Japan (Minoura, 1979). When Japanese students who are old enough to understand cultural expectations move to America during preadolescence, some, more than others, successfully acculturate, learning the language and other cultural patterns that enable them to effectively navigate within a temporary cultural context.

The student's age, as Minoura (1979) points out, directly affects the acculturation process. Maturation includes age, level of maturity in comparison with American peers, and the developmental period in which competency in language is acquired.

How the family environment impacts the acculturation process requires an understanding of the Japanese household and its relationship to hierarchy and harmony among family members. The father is traditionally the wage earner. His employment status and role also impact the family's status in the community and may determine the

nature of the residential neighborhood, and hence, the school attendance zone. The mother traditionally devotes her time to caring for her children's physical, emotional, and educational needs and all matters pertaining to the home. She is responsible for teaching her children to develop harmonious relationships.

Length of stay, the time the Japanese family resides in America, determines the extent to which acculturation proceeds and is influenced by the age of the student. Ideally, if the research is accurate, the optimum time period for the Japanese students to live and learn within America is during their intermediate school years. Cummins (1991) reports that length of residency is significantly related to language acquisition in second-language learners. His research corroborates what I have witnessed in the years that Japanese students have attended the intermediate school where this study takes place: that it takes two to three years to acquire grade-level proficiency in the target language.

Educational circumstances for *kaigaishijo* in an American school include a number of aspects: grade level, teacher and classroom to which the student is assigned, peer relations, and acceptance into play and other social groups. Community and school values, including socio-economic status, customs, dress, and etiquette, are all part of the educational circumstances to be considered. Special tutorial assistance provided by an ESL teacher must also be examined as it impacts education for *kaigaishijo*. The ease with which the school accepts Japanese students and promotes their adjustment necessarily factors into the acculturation process. Determining a specific curriculum to implement for *kaigaishijo* to ameliorate educational circumstances is, however, beyond the scope of this study.

Research questions. Certain questions frame the study to explain the phenomenon of *kaigaishijo* attending public school in America. Those questions are:

- What environmental and sociocultural contextual factors facilitate the adjustment of *kaigaishijo* attending American schools?
- How do *kaigaishijo* in an American public school context function as they become acculturated?
- What patterns are observable during the stages of acculturation?
- To what degree do *kaigaishijo* eliminate characteristic Japanese behaviors that promote harmonious relationships and accept Western individualism?
- What roles do families, peers, and educators play in the acculturation process?
- How does length of residency impact acculturation?
- To what extent do developmental rates, maturation, and age affect the acculturation process, including language acquisition?
- How do educators impact outcomes and enhance academic opportunities for Japanese students attending American schools?

Statement of the Purpose

The influx of Japanese industry into a Middle Atlantic state has introduced Japanese families and students into a formerly homogeneous school community. Japanese fathers are employed by the following companies located in the area: Canon, Sumitomo, Mitsubishi, NGK Ceramic Manufacturing, South Tech, Usui International, Nippon Express, Yusen Air & Sea Service, and Yupo Corporation (H. Nakamura, personal communication, 1996). Their children, the *kaigaishijo*, are currently enrolled in

public schools throughout the region. As property-holding taxpayers, Japanese families are entitled to send their children to American schools. Formerly homogeneous, the school population, with the introduction of *kaigaishijo* and other cross-cultural students, has become more diverse.

It is extremely difficult to generalize about *kaigaishijo* considering the diversity of both America and Japan. Personal and cultural attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions of the children and their families as well as the fact that these students know they will be returning to Japan impact the acculturation process. As an American school administrator, I hope to contribute to a better understanding of patterns or stages in the acculturation process for these students as I observe them in their normal school routine. Through careful observation of the process and interviews with students, parents, and teachers, I describe and explain what the *kaigaishijo* experience as they acculturate. While our American classrooms are increasingly pluralistic and filled with students from an array of American sub-cultures, including diverse socioeconomic, familial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds, educators most often possess Euro-American, monolingual, middle-class backgrounds and have limited knowledge of cultures other than their own. Problematic cross-cultural contacts interrupt the learning process when educators are unprepared in terms of performance expectations and attitudes toward diversity.

The school district requires no teaching credentials for an ESL teacher to instruct second-language learners. In the intermediate school where this study takes place, only teachers who have undergraduate and graduate degrees are hired for all teaching positions. Since the ESL position offers only an hourly wage and no benefits, the person

hired usually takes the position on a temporary basis until a regular teaching position becomes available. The turnover rate for ESL teachers is the greatest of any position in the school. Teaching materials, a curriculum, and staff development are unavailable for the ESL program. The ESL teacher uses resources accessible through the media center and often purchases books or borrows public library materials considered adequate for beginning readers. The maximum amount of daily tutoring allowed each ESL student is one hour.

American educators who have little knowledge of cultural differences are at a disadvantage as they attempt to teach Japanese students within an immersion setting. Teachers may not feel the same kind of commitment to sojourners as they do to their American students. It cannot be overemphasized that teachers play a critical role in the acculturation process (Clayton, 1996). Consequently, it behooves educators to be cognizant of the acculturation process for *kaigaishijo* who, unlike immigrants who plan to remain, are temporarily attending American schools.

This study is an effort to sort out and to specify the dimensions of the acculturation process for Japanese students attending an intermediate school in America. It is necessarily an exploratory effort that focuses on an analysis and interpretation of the acculturation process as a precursor for determining educational objectives deemed appropriate for these sojourners. My research does not fall under the category of improvement studies or the discovery of cultural solutions to educational situations for minority populations. It does, however, include the study of processes and patterns that extend beyond the classroom with long-range goals of providing knowledge for the

development of more effective teacher training and educational curriculum for a specific population. Determining curriculum for *kaigaishijo* is, however, beyond the scope of this study and is not my intent at this time. This research should, however, raise consciousness levels of school policy-makers, administrators, and teachers concerning the necessity to dispel stereotypes and acknowledge differences as ways of understanding and accepting diversity. The acculturation process for *kaigaishijo*, if taken seriously, could lead to more inclusive and thoughtful learning environments for all cross-cultural students.

A negative aspect of our postmodern, technological world is reinforcement of stereotypes (Said, 1978). This study of the phenomenon of acculturation in an American school is undertaken not only as an attempt to dispel myths and stereotypical images but also to increase our awareness of our responsibilities as educators to students. Stewart and Bennet (1991) remind us that “ethnocentric beliefs about one’s own culture shape a sense of identity which is narrow and defensive” (p. 161). Instead of making comparative judgments that ennoble American culture, this study is intended to elucidate salient aspects of the acculturation process for *kaigaishijo* and to suggest implications as I see them for American public schools and educators.

Limitations and Delimitations

Due to constraints upon time and the fact that this project was conducted while I served as a full-time school administrator, my research was impacted by a number of interacting variables. Most of my information was limited to and defined by personal observations and contacts made within one school rather than on classroom observations

throughout the district. I delimited the study to Japanese students who will return to Japan and did not look at any other population. My study concentrated on the Japanese population attending one intermediate school during a circumscribed time frame and any other Japanese families residing in the area whose children had attended this intermediate school in previous years. Although I have witnessed the flow of Japanese students into this community during the course of seven years, I limited my actual interviews and observations to the period between August and March of one school year. I also consulted Japanese high school students at neighboring high schools only when the demands of my schedule permitted me to leave the intermediate school premises. This study was further limited by the size of the Japanese student population currently enrolled in the school where I am assigned. Lack of financial resources in the form of grants or any other supplements, coupled with my job requirements, necessarily restricted the breadth of this study by confining the study to students attending one school. I was limited to classroom observations of four Japanese students in grades three through five.

My visits to the Japanese School for Supplementary Education (Saturday school) enhanced the depth of this study. Supported by the parents, the school has traditionally recruited teachers from area universities, school systems, and surrounding communities where Japanese teachers may reside. Two fathers of former students who had attended the intermediate school where this study takes place expressed a willingness to provide information and offered interesting insights. Both of them are employees of Sumitomo Corporation of America and have some understanding of the balancing act in which Japanese students attending school in America are engaged.

The influence of the Hawthorne Effect was expected to be minimal in that I routinely observe in regular classrooms and resource settings throughout the school as part of my job expectations. Although the Japanese families knew that I was conducting research and gave written consent for their children to be interviewed, they understood that the design of the study is neither experimental nor invasive. Given the small population I observed within a limited framework, I was unable to set up a control group. “The influence of the Hawthorne Effect can be expected to decrease as the novelty...wears off” (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 190) if, indeed, students were aware that my observations in their classrooms were related to research.

This study was further delimited by information provided by Japanese parents. They were willing to share information with me but frequently told me they were unable to adequately express their feelings in English. I, too, was restricted by my inability to speak or read the Japanese language and depended upon translations and interpretations possibly colored by various perspectives. I recognized that by taking a particular perspective on an educational issue I limited the focus as well as what could be uncovered. I have presented as clearly as possible from my vantage point what I observed about the acculturation process for *kaigaishijo*.

Definitions of Key Terms

All terms and concepts are explained thoroughly within the body of this study. The following list is offered to clarify terms used most frequently:

Acculturation. This term describes both a state and a process in which sojourners are involved during their period of residence in the host country. It requires of the

sojourner an orientation to the new culture and the ability to navigate comfortably within a temporary environment. Attaining a comfortable congruency between one's native culture and one's host culture appears to best describe complete acculturation (Clayton, 1996; White, 1988).

Assimilation. Becoming one with the host culture, as in the case of immigrants, best describes this process. Immigrants, who intend to stay in this country, assimilate. Sojourners, due to their temporary status, do not tend to assimilate (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Spickard, 1996).

ESL (English as a Second Language). American schools provide services for students whose native language is not English. Depending upon circumstances, a student's English may be limited or nonexistent. Sometimes services are part of a bilingual program. When, as in the intermediate school in which this study took place, there are only a few second-language students, they are pulled from immersion settings for individual ESL assistance.

Kaigaishijo. Coined by the Japanese Ministry of Education, this word describes Japanese children of mandatory school age (6 through 15 years) living abroad and attending school (Furuiye, 1997). One or both parents may be serving in capacities as students, college professors, or business persons. In this study, only the fathers of *kaigaishijo* are employed by companies that are part of the trend toward globalization of business.

Kikokushijo. This word, also invented by the Japanese Ministry of Education, describes returnee children of Japanese business persons who have spent at least three

months overseas with their parents and have returned to Japan to continue their education (Goodman, 1990). After prolonged exposure to other cultures, *kikokushijo* may be stigmatized because they are different from children who have been socialized only in Japan.

Language acquisition. For the purposes of this study, language acquisition is defined as the evolving process of learning and using language, specifically, a second language. For students who are sojourners or immigrants, the acquisition of English is deemed necessary for both academic and social purposes (Clayton, 1996).

Maturation. A word that encompasses many meanings, maturation implies language development (Singleton, 1989), ageing, cognitive development (Collier, 1989), readiness for instruction (Elkind, 1997), and learner attributes (Cummins & Swain, 1989) as they impact the acculturation process.

CHAPTER 2

When Cultures Interface

The major construct under consideration in this study is acculturation. The assimilation of minorities into a new or majority culture is the traditional view of acculturation. Immigrants experience phases in the process ranging from exhilaration upon entrance into a new culture to shock upon recognition of differences between home and the new land. “Immigrants from different countries have tended to assimilate to the culture in their new societies to very different degrees” (Sowell, 1996, p. 47). Traditionally, the culmination of the process “is characterized by the minority person or group giving up its traditions, values, and language, and replacing them with those of the majority culture” (Clayton, 1996, p. 5).

A more contemporary view of acculturation, the one to which I adhere, describes it as a combination of multidimensional patterns suggesting that assimilation may be only one of many patterns among a variety of end-states. Berry, Kim, and Boski (1988) suggest that newcomers may use a myriad of strategies, including adjustment, reaction, or withdrawal, as they acculturate. Acculturation may be a combination of one or more responses including assimilation, integration, separation, or marginalization (Clayton, 1996). From my conversations with parents of *kaigaishijo*, I think acculturation also includes accommodation or trying to get along and endure temporary circumstances. For

the purposes of this study, assimilation is not considered part of the process of acculturation. “Once an individual identifies with the host society he tends toward assimilation” (Sung, 1987, p. 227). Unlike other immigrants who come to stay, *kaigaishijo* know that they will return to Japan. *Kaigaishijo* cope with their temporary circumstances in America in various ways. “To achieve congruency with their environment” is the ultimate goal of cross-cultural students (Clayton, 1996, p. 8).

Acculturation varies “according to whether [the newcomers] perceive the surrounding culture as desirable or undesirable” (Sowell, 1996, p. 47). Cross-cultural students, in attempting to reach a comfort level in the host culture may experience feelings of alienation and separation, manifested in overt and covert behavior changes, during the process of acculturation. Psychological acculturation is now widely accepted as an individual phenomenon. Feelings of alienation and loss of identity result in acculturative stress marked by psychological alienation when the immigrant’s contact with her/his native culture is severed before a comfort level is attained within the new culture (Graves, 1967; Berry et al., 1988). Alienation is akin to the classic situation of marginality, the response of an individual who no longer feels comfortable in either culture (Stonequist, 1937). Separation “occurs when, for any number of reasons, the person withdraws and strengthens ties with the old culture” (Clayton, 1996, p. 5).

Kaigaishijo are sojourners in America. Using a working definition that discriminates sojourners from immigrants or refugees, the “most salient dimension is temporal--a sojourner spends a medium length of time (six months to five years) at a place” (Furnham, 1988, p. 43), usually with the intention of returning to her/his country

of origin. Specifically, *kaigaishijo* are children of Japanese businessmen on *temporary* overseas assignments.

In classrooms where students are expected to be assertive, to volunteer answers competently and confidently, Japanese students who come from a homogeneous culture must feel overwhelmed when they neither understand the expectations nor speak the language of the host culture. “Mainstream teachers play a crucial role in this process during the first few months of acculturation” (Clayton, 1996, p. 6). The social setting and teaching approaches impact the successful learning of the target language (Fillmore, 1991). For example, in classroom environments where teachers direct instructional activities but allow students a considerable amount of autonomy over their learning, numerous opportunities are available for peer interaction. However, in tightly-structured classrooms controlled by the teacher, opportunities for sociability are limited. Personality and sociability affect interactional style between second-language learners and speakers of the target language (Cummins & Swain, 1986; Fillmore, 1991). In fact, a significant finding to emerge from one study of bilingual proficiency development indicates that interactional styles of Japanese students may be manifestations of personality attributes, such as being very shy or very outgoing (Cummins & Swain, 1986).

Acquisition of English, a second language for *kaigaishijo*, is critical for educational success in American schools where English is the language of instruction. Student motivation to learn a second language is more important than aptitude in predicting second language competence (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Yet, “very little basic research...addresses variables that might influence this process, such as the length of

time and the level of L2 (second language) proficiency required to achieve academic success in a second language” (Collier, 1989, p. 509).

In her study of four cross-cultural students, Clayton (1996) viewed the acculturation process as a series of linear adjustments within a suburban school system. Beset by numerous challenges, the children seemed to be experiencing a continuous state of flux, vacillating between withdrawal and adjustment. Clayton searched for underlying patterns of acculturation and the impact of the school on the children’s adjustment to their new environment, suggesting that the primary challenge of learning a second language is the greatest hurdle all cross-cultural students must overcome. “Learning the language, however, was for more than just academic purposes; it also was for social purposes, a very important need for these students” (Clayton, 1996, p. 68).

Clayton proposed that successful cross-cultural adaptation for minority or ethnic students is dependent upon a multicultural approach to education. She emphasized that differences must be acknowledged. Secondly, the positive impact of non-majority students in classrooms must be recognized and incorporated into classroom teaching strategies. Third, when inevitable conflict or misunderstanding occurs, it should be “appreciated as a way of learning about ideas complementary to each other instead of canceling out each other” (Clayton, 1996, p. 133). Fourth, ecological sensitivity, such as pointing out on a map the location of the minority student’s native country, enhances students’ opportunities for exploring, understanding, and respecting cultural differences.

A significant finding to emerge from Minoura’s (1979) research into cultural identity acquisition among Japanese students in California emanated from her

quantitative analysis of age-linked factors. Based upon Piaget's theory of cognitive development, she established that Japanese students "acquired a culture-specific system of meanings within the limits set by maturation" (Minoura, 1979, p. 386). She postulated that the personality, manifested through observable behavior, is flexible enough through the age of 11 for Japanese students to switch their behavior to American patterns. During the critical period between the ages of 11 and 13 when children have matured enough to recognize the existence of cultural meaning systems, they may "experience considerable psychological discomfort when they attempt to acquire the behavioral patterns...of the other culture" (Minoura, 1979, p. 389). Her findings indicated that maturational readiness is the primary determinant of cultural identity, interaction with members of the host culture is a secondary factor, and all other factors are negligible. Acknowledging her contributions to this exceedingly complex phenomenon, I suggest that a comprehensive understanding of the acculturation process for *kaigaishijo* requires a qualitative approach whereby numerous relevant variables must be simultaneously explored.

The process of acculturation involves more than learning a new language, although that is integral to academic and social success for the students. *Kaigaishijo* must learn Western values that underlie social behavior. When value systems come into conflict, it is usually the cross-cultural student who is most adversely affected (Clayton, 1996). "The differences in values (social, moral, work, and so on) that exist among many cultures have been used to account for the misunderstandings, distress, and difficulties experienced by cross-cultural sojourners" (Furnham, 1988, p. 56).

Although most often associated with negative consequences, the experience of culture shock is common among sojourners in the process of acculturation. Negative feelings associated with culture shock include anxiety, distrust, lack of self-confidence, and loss of spontaneity (Oberg, 1960; Nash, 1967). Its negative aspects are mediated by prior exposure to other cultures and social contact with members of the host culture (Furnham, 1988). An alternative view of culture shock is that it is a transitional experience resulting in adoption of new attitudes and insights that contribute to more adaptable and flexible behavior patterns and higher levels of self-awareness (David, 1972; Adler, 1975; Yoshikawa, 1988).

The mode that best protects sojourners and immigrants from acculturative stress is integration. Berry et al. (1988) describe the process as a “blending or mellowing of cultural differences among cultural prototypes” (p. 82) when the minority group interacts with the larger society. This kind of blending of cultural differences could be indicative of the process of acculturative integration. It involves a recognition of differences but a willingness on the part of the host culture to allow for those differences. As *kaigaishijo* begin to function in the host culture, they must attain a comfort level in which differences are minimalized. If a Japanese student’s desire to integrate is recognized by teachers and peers, that acknowledgment may reduce the student’s stress level and enable her/him to participate in the social environment at her/his level of ability.

The Chinese Experience in America

The immigrant and sojourner experiences of Asian peoples in America are not the same. Obvious similarities exist when both groups encounter Western culture and a

different language. However, the goals of the two groups differ. Immigrants come to seek a better life and to remain in America. Sojourners plan to return to their native country perhaps to build a better life after they have made money in America. Residing here for a brief time, they may feel that they do not need to learn about the culture or speak the language (Clayton, 1996).

Although the first Chinese arrived in America in the eighteenth century (Lai, 1981), large-scale Chinese immigration began in the middle of the nineteenth century in response to the discovery of gold in California. As prosperous merchants in China, those early immigrants seldom remained long enough or were successful enough to bring their wives and families with them to America. The merchants were welcomed as dependable persons, but the arrival of coolie laborers caused attitudes toward Chinese immigrants to change. With the enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 which stopped further immigration, many Chinese men were permanently cut off from their families in China and were forced to live destitute lives in a country where there was little chance for intermarriage (Sowell, 1996). Working as cooks, storekeepers, and employees of mining companies, the Chinese who persevered during the gold rush years despite adverse frontier conditions managed to send “an estimated \$11 million back to Kwangtung province, where nearly all the Chinese in the United States originated” (Sowell, 1996, p. 222).

When San Francisco began to grow as a result of the gold rush, the industrious Chinese worked not only as domestic laborers but also set up laundries, restaurants, pharmacies, canneries, and cigar factories as well as numerous small vegetable, fruit, and

flower shops. As the Chinese prospered, American resentment grew against them and often erupted in the form of mob violence. Anti-Chinese laws and violence finally forced the immigrants to disperse to numerous geographic locations within the United States and to work mainly in restaurants and laundries usually located in Chinatown sections of metropolitan areas.

Dispersion and withdrawal from direct competition with white Americans coupled with the development of family life made the Chinese less noticeable. As Chinatowns began to cooperate with local authorities and “changed from being crime-ridden, drug-ridden places...[into] colorful tourist attractions, the image as well as the incomes of the Chinese benefitted” (Sowell, 1996, p. 225). Conscientious Chinese children were welcomed into the public school setting. After Japan invaded China, and especially after the Chinese and Americans became allies during the Second World War, the stage was set in 1943 for the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

Resentment against the Chinese did not abate, however. As middlemen, Chinese businessmen seemed to understand credit and haggling better than their white competitors. Poor immigrants continued to arrive and sometimes surpassed in prosperity the indigenous populations around them. Well-behaved Chinese children proved to be good students and became well-educated and sometimes wealthy adults. When the postwar era brought a new wave of non-English-speaking Chinese immigrants to America, many were forced to settle in Chinatowns and were limited by their economic options. The new immigrants often did not have the same cultural origins as the Chinese Americans (who had already settled in America) and had difficulty integrating socially

with them, much less assimilating into the broader culture. The incomes of Chinese immigrants of the previous decade (1980) were about half those of native Chinese Americans (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1990). Nevertheless, the overall achievements and prosperity of Chinese in the United States have been as remarkable as the hostility they have endured. The dramatic early experiences of Chinese immigrants in America have clearly illustrated that adversity often spawns creativity.

Current literature specifically addressing Chinese immigrant children in America is almost non-existent and that pertaining to the Chinese population as a whole is scanty. Sung (1987) provides interesting insights into the Chinese immigrant population in New York City and postulates that “the relatively tolerant attitude toward foreigners and minorities that prevailed during the Sixties and Seventies” (p. 229) resulted in funding for programs for ethnic minorities that has been reversed. Bilingual education, ESL services, and guidance counseling continue to erode due to deliberate political choices not to fund these programs. With restricted immigration laws and fewer social programs, Chinese immigrants attempting to cope with different cultural expectations and a new language may experience maladjustment in “sink or swim” situations.

The Japanese Experience in America

Following in the wake of Chinese immigration from 1885 to 1894, “Japanese were initially welcomed as substitutes for the Chinese as coolie labor, but then they too became increasingly resented, as they advanced to small farming and small business enterprise” (Sowell, 1996, p. 117). By 1920, Chinese and Japanese were lumped together as “the yellow peril” that threatened the fiber of American society (Hamanaka, 1990).

Racial discrimination forced many Japanese into segregated neighborhoods. In metropolitan areas like Sacramento, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, “Little Tokyos” sprang up where immigrants sought safety among their own kind. Alien land laws precluded the *Issei*, first-generation of Japanese in America, from owning their own homes, farms, or grocery stores. All immigration from Japan to America was halted in 1924. “However, time was on the side of the Japanese, as their American-born children were automatically citizens of the United States, to whom the land laws could not apply under the U. S. Constitution” (Sowell, 1990, p. 117).

The *Nisei*, American-born Japanese children of the first generation of immigrants, however, endured an outrage as a result of the bombing of the U. S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, a naval base in Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. More than 100,000 Japanese were interned within hours of the bombing (Wilson & Hosokawa, 1980). They were sent to concentration camps erected on American Indian reservations. “The economic impact was as devastating as the social trauma” (Sowell, 1990, p. 118). As the war intensified in Europe, Japanese in the concentration camps were forced to sign loyalty oaths and youths above the age of seventeen were conscripted for military service. Those who protested the signing of loyalty pledges were “shipped to Tule Lake where they were guarded by a full battalion of 920 [soldiers] and six tanks” (Hamanaka, 1990, p. 24). Although the last Japanese finally left the camps in 1946, it was not until 40 years later that reparation was offered for the indignities endured. In 1988, the American government formally apologized to all survivors of the internment camps and “paid twenty thousand dollars each” to the survivors (Hamanaka, 1990, p. 34).

A remarkable reversal of attitudes toward the Japanese evolved in America as Japanese quickly acquired a reputation for integrity and honesty. “Regional and neighborhood concentrations of Japanese dissolved in the United States and in Canada, partly as a result of the wartime internment experience” (Sowell, 1990, p. 138). In observing the success of Japanese families who relocated in Chicago due to anti-Asian prejudice on the Pacific Coast after World War II, Caudill and DeVos (1956) hypothesize significant compatibility between the relocated Japanese and the indigenous American middle class cultures on the basis of shared values rather than personality or character structure. We tend to overlook the fact that both the American middle class and the Japanese “share the values of politeness, respect for authority and parental wishes, duty to community, diligence, cleanliness and neatness, emphasis on personal achievement of long-range goals, importance of keeping up appearances, and others” (Caudill & DeVos, 1956, p. 1107). The fact that Japanese industries are currently choosing to locate in the Middle Atlantic states is indicative of the perceived compatibility between Japanese and American middle class values. Despite racial characteristics and a culture considered alien, Japanese families in Chicago and the Middle Atlantic states appear to enjoy the same kind of success in feeling that they are part of the mainstream “because certain compatibilities in the value systems of the immigrant and host cultures operated strongly enough to override the more obvious difficulties” (Caudill & DeVos, 1956, p. 1117).

Honigmann (1956) contends that both the American middle class and the Japanese, either consciously or due to conforming attitudes, look to those around them for contextual cues. Both groups illustrate that success in the world today requires a

personality “that takes its cues from each social situation in which the individual is placed” (Honigmann, 1956, p. 146). The acculturation process under scrutiny proceeds for Japanese children in the United States not “because their culture and the American middle class are the same, but rather because of the functional compatibility and interaction between the two” (Kitano, 1976, p. 139). Education among peoples with compatible values eliminates many barriers to understanding that can separate different cultures. Japanese “probably have a better chance of succeeding [at acculturation] than individuals from other ethnic groups where the underlying cultural patterns are less in harmony with those of the American middle class” (Caudill & DeVos, 1956, p. 1117).

The upward mobility of third generation Japanese Americans, the *Sansei*, in the 1960s gave rise to the model minority myth. According to the myth, “by dint of quiet hard work and good values, Japanese Americans and other Asians had become what other, darker, seemingly more threatening minorities had not: successful members of the American middle class” (Spickard, 1996, p. 144). The myth seemed to imply that if all other minorities would apply themselves as the Asians had, they would cease to be a social burden on this country. Acceptance of the myth enabled “Americans to avoid dealing with the real problems of racial hierarchy in the United States” (Spickard, 1996, p. 145). The stereotype also diminished the accomplishments of Japanese Americans who are expected to make remarkable achievements because of their race. For example, when a fourth-generation Japanese American female achieved a perfect score on a chemistry test, her white teacher responded: “What do you expect? She’s Japanese” (Spickard, 1996, p. 145).

At the close of the twentieth century, most *Sansei* “have entered more or less fully into mainstream American cultural life and modes of expression” (Spickard, 1996, 159). Since the 1970s, many studies have portrayed Japanese Americans as fully assimilated into the mainstream American culture. The Japanese American population, including intermarriers and their children, has become so scattered and diverse that there are virtually no common interests that bind them together in the United States (Spickard, 1996).

Vanguard of the future. The influx of Japanese industry into the Middle Atlantic region is part of what is called “a new kind of diaspora” (Willis, Enloe, & Minoura, 1992, p. 29) or dispersion of highly-skilled or highly-qualified persons to a different area of the globe because of employment. This phenomenon requires the careful consideration of educators. Japanese students of international status have been described as both marginal and elite. If perceived as change agents, the *kikokushijo* could be considered as valuable assets whose unique global perspective should equip them to be the vanguard of the future (Goodman, 1990).

Unlike immigrants and minorities who wish to assimilate into the host culture, *kaigaishijo* engage in acculturation, a process marked by patterns somewhat difficult to measure. After their sojourn in America, these students find that their international experience separates them from mainstream Japanese. On that basis, Japan’s Ministry of Education established the “Kaigai Shijo Kyoiku Shinko Zaidan (known in English as Japan Overseas Education Services) to co-ordinate overseas and returnee education” (Goodman, 1994). Parents pressured the government to establish special schools for

kikokushijo, because they felt that their children were being unfairly discriminated against. In response to that pressure, the Ministry of Education not only established special schools for returnees but also tied international schools to certain universities as part of the tier system of university entrance (Goodman, 1994).

Marginality

Stonequist (1961) explains that "the individual who...leaves one social group or culture without making a satisfactory adjustment to another finds himself on the margin of each but a member of neither" (pp. 2-3). The marginal person's conscious or unconscious efforts to change the situation inevitably promote acculturation. The histories of marginal persons offer materials rich in data for the analysis of the cultural process resulting from contacts between groups (Stonequist, 1961). Marginality focuses on human migration and the accompanying processes of acculturation and assimilation (Park, 1928). Through the experiences of Japanese students in America, as well as those of any peoples in countries where fusions of cultures are occurring, "we can best study the processes of civilization and of progress" (Park, 1928, p. 893).

Kaigaishijo, who very well may fit the description of marginal persons in some instances, will eventually return with their parents to Japan. While they are here, though, due to circumstances beyond their control, they are introduced to a new language and culture. In the sense that they have one foot in a culture of homogeneity consistent with values of Japanese culture, while the other foot is in the Western culture of individualism, they experience marginality. Public education accelerates the acculturation process and often leads to assimilation into the host culture among the second generation of minority

peoples (Hughes, 1970). The degree of marginality that *kaigaishijo* experience is apparently affected by the way students cope with their period of temporary residence in the United States. The manner in which they cope is not necessarily a linear process but one dependent upon interacting variables.

On the basis of observations in an intermediate school, I would suggest that many Japanese students undergo various levels of discomfort and that some experience mild psychological distress attributed to their marginality as the acculturation process proceeds. The Japanese "distrust of ambiguity in belonging" (Valentine, 1994, p. 38) suggests that the phenomenon under observation, a type of marginal situation, paradoxically is advantageous and disadvantageous for the students. Although persons of marginal status in Japanese society are usually conceived of as peripheral, "marginals can play a vital role in introducing a sense of cultural relativism into the mainstream" (Valentine, 1994, p. 48). Consequently, *kikokushijo* could conceivably extract meaning from both cultures through the acculturation process to present a third perspective to mediate the extreme differences between East and West. With less emphasis upon the negative aspects of marginality and more emphasis upon the positive process of acculturation, American educators should view *kaigaishijo* as assets within the total educational setting. Goodman (1994) argues that the marginality experienced by the *kikokushijo* places them in both a precarious position and a powerful one. In the move toward internationalization, "there is concern that there should continue to be a specifically Japanese culture to be passed on and that this will not evaporate" (Hendry, 1996, pp. 112-113). The powerful position is one in which *kikokushijo* could represent a

vanguard of an elite cosmopolitan group who could guide Japan during the next century in a “realistic understanding of global participation” (White, 1988, p. 123).

Involuntary Minorities

Unlike immigrants who voluntarily move to a new land for greater political freedom or economic opportunities, *kaigaishijo* are involuntary minorities who are here in America because of their fathers' jobs. At least one researcher believes that involuntary minorities “experience more difficulties with social adjustment and school performance” than either voluntary or autonomous minorities (Ogbu, 1987, p. 321). Autonomous minorities, represented in America by peoples such as Jews and Mormons, “do not experience disproportionate and persistent problems in learning to read and to compute, partly because they usually have a cultural frame of reference that demonstrates and encourages school success” (Ogbu, 1987, p. 320). Unlike autonomous minorities, involuntary minorities, a category that may describe *kaigaishijo*, face primary cultural differences such as language, values, beliefs, and customs that existed prior to their entry into America. Secondary cultural differences result as a response when the two cultures clash (Ogbu, 1987).

An outgrowth of secondary cultural differences, cultural inversion, in turn, can lead to oppositional social identity (Ogbu, 1987). If carried to the extreme, the behavior that results when opposing value systems clash may manifest itself in marginality, either individually or in groups. Often the group marginality takes the form of deviant organizations such as Hispanic gangs or Chinese tongs. This demonstration of alienation is a negative response to marginality.

Involuntary minorities do not have the option of immediately returning to their homelands but must cope within the context in which they find themselves. Difficulties involuntary minorities experience in school largely depend upon “their own perceptions of and responses to the cultural and language differences facing them” (Ogbu, 1987, p. 327). If involuntary minorities “are willing and actually strive to play the classroom games by the rules and try to overcome all kinds of difficulties in school because they believe so strongly that there will be a payoff later,” they can eliminate or usually reduce some of the obstacles and anxieties they encounter (Ogbu, 1987, p. 328). Skepticism and distrust, on the other hand, may impede the acculturation process.

Interpersonal Relationships

If enculturation to the primary culture is the result of child rearing practices, then the impact of those practices must be understood as they relate to the acculturation process. Environmental and sociocultural practices can either impede or facilitate acculturation for the Japanese students. At the intermediate grade levels, certain *kaigaishijo* behavioral patterns, such as waiting to question the teacher after instruction is over or failing to look the teacher in the face, distinguish Japanese students as they undergo the process of acculturation within the American public school setting.

Family situation and the *uchi* environment. Scholars suggest that the role of the mother impacts the degree to which Japanese children acculturate (Benedict, 1946; Caudill & Weinstein, 1969; Goldstein & Tamura, 1975; Hendry, 1996; Iwao, 1993; White, 1987). So immersed is the Japanese mother in her responsibility to properly train her children to be perfect members of society that in Japan “this role has spawned its own

label, *kyoiku mama* (education mother)" (Simons, 1987, p. 46). Many Japanese mothers rightfully earn that reputation for their overzealous involvement in their children's training, especially in the area of education. "One of the most...caricatured figures in Japanese society, the true education mama sets her children's academic success above everything else in life" (Christopher, 1983, p. 88).

Japanese family culture centers around *uchi* (inside) relations as opposed to *soto* (outside) relations (Hendry, 1996). The father's employment outside the home consumes much of his time, leaving the mother to control *uchi* matters. Far from being the passive person stereotypically portrayed walking several steps behind her husband, the Japanese mother and housewife handles family finances and all matters pertaining to rearing the children. "She must at times be aggressive on behalf of the children's education and...the family. Thus, her skills center on the ability to manage relationships and to develop and maintain long-range plans" (White, 1988, p. 23). To a great extent "the efficiency and success of the home depend on a high degree of predictability of event and behavior" which is directly related to the mother's authority and control of *uchi* relations (White, 1988, p. 23).

To ensure her children's success in society, the Japanese mother has no choice but to encourage and direct their education since credentials are the guarantee of a successful life (Benjamin, 1997; Hendry, 1987). Predictability in transcultural relations, however, cannot be assumed. Due to her unfamiliarity with the new culture and often her lack of fluency in English, the mother can be somewhat disadvantaged in directing her children's educational progress in America. The father's role in no way conflicts with the mother's.

“His identity is defined by membership in his work group, an identity reinforced by his relationship to his family as a functional or necessary outsider” (White, 1988, p. 86).

Traditionally, it is not the father’s responsibility to concern himself with his children’s educational progress. It is the mother’s responsibility to nurture and support her children within the *uchi* (inside) environment because they face frustrations in *soto* matters, the culture, primarily the school, outside the home (Hendry, 1987).

An American mother sees her child as an independent entity while the Japanese mother feels compelled to nurture her child in a manner that encourages dependence upon her (Caudill & Weinstein, 1969). The whole idea of obligation and dependency fostered by mothers in their children and reflected in Japanese personality, family, education, company, and society is a distinguishing characteristic of Japanese culture (Simons, 1987). While interdependence and respect for tradition and harmony in human relationships remain important to the Japanese, Americans give higher priority to independence than to interpersonal skills (White, 1987).

The Japanese mother indulges her offspring to the extent that would seem to spoil the child by Western standards. “She knows her baby very well, tends to anticipate its wishes, rarely lets it cry, and seldom leaves it by itself” (Goldstein & Tamura, 1975, p. 146). A sense of independence is fostered in an American infant who is given a separate bedroom and a crib and toys and is expected to entertain her/himself for much of the time after birth. “The Japanese child does not experience this ego separation so early...and does not experience...separation quite as firmly throughout its early and adult life” (Goldstein & Tamura, 1975, p. 147).

Conformity and harmony. Training in the Japanese home, and later at school, encourages conformity and harmony. Every effort is made to help the child become part of the family unit or school group and not to stand out as different in any way. "The concern of adults to create a secure and attentive environment for a small child is part of this wider emphasis in Japanese society on harmony in social relations" (Hendry, 1987, p. 47). By indulging the child in order to promote household harmony, "the Japanese mother and child remain a unit long after the American mother and child have become separated" (Goldstein & Tamura, 1975, p. 153). The family also encourages harmony and conformity by cultivating a sense of shame in a child for deviant behavior that will reflect on the mother. "True shame cultures rely on external sanctions for good behavior, not, as true guilt cultures do, on an internalized conviction of sin" (Benedict, 1946, p. 223). The Japanese child who misbehaves brings attention and ridicule to himself and his family from outsiders. Bringing attention to oneself, standing out as different, and confronting others are considered inappropriate behaviors by the Japanese people. Hence, Japanese children gradually learn appropriate *tatemae*, public behavior that emphasizes the most important aspect of social relations, namely, harmony (Hendry, 1996).

Harmony, essential for Japanese homogeneity, is inextricably intertwined with *tatemae* and *honne*, complex concepts regarding true or private feelings, and the structure of the language. *Uchi* and *soto* matters are also an integral part of correct behavior for all Japanese. Not only do patterns of behavior taught by the mother reinforce these concepts integral to the Japanese perspective, but also the language incorporates speech levels

related to relationships among people according to the context in which they find themselves (Goldstein & Tamura, 1975; Hendry, 1996). Early in the socialization process, the Japanese child learns to use the linguistic distinctions considered appropriate to denote status variation by age and sex. What Americans might consider straightforwardness or frankness in conversation seems to the Japanese egotistical. Different views related to different values are grounded in the language structures taught to each generation (Goldstein & Tamura, 1975). Different value systems result in distinctly different perspectives of reality across two cultures. "The importance of these distinctions cannot be overemphasized in explaining features of Japanese society...for it is in choosing the appropriate 'face' for a particular occasion that one is able successfully to fulfill one's social role in the world" (Hendry, 1996, p. 46). Identity among the Japanese involves belonging to the group and for the sake of the group "face" must always be saved (Naff, 1996, p. 33). The Japanese concern with harmony seems repressive to self-expression by American standards. On the other hand, the Japanese view the American emphasis on external freedom as isolating. "The harmony that the Japanese experiences is one of adjusting the self to various outside differences, and where this harmony prevails that state may be defined as freedom" (Goldstein & Tamura, 1975, p. 169). The principles of reciprocity and hierarchy are tantamount to establishing and maintaining harmonious social relations among members of Japanese society.

Japanese children learn within the family the concept of reciprocity by exhortation "to think of how it would feel if another child were to do to it what it is doing to another child" (Hendry, 1996, p. 47). The notion of reciprocity that the Japanese mother instills

in her children reinforces the attitude that people are good or bad in light of their social relationships. The mother teaches her children to understand themselves in order to understand the inner feelings of others. Westerners may think such expectations are too high for young children, but the concept of hierarchy within the family resolves the problem. Terms of address, verbs, and speech levels specify hierarchical distinctions, such as younger brother, grandfather, or older sister, and are used not only to teach a child polite language and social positions but also to ensure harmony, the Japanese ideal in social relations (Christopher, 1983; Goldstein & Tamura, 1975; Hendry, 1996).

Ikigai. A final point to consider with respect to the family situation involves a pronounced difference between Eastern and Western perspectives that bias patterns of behavior. *Ikigai*, that which "makes one's life seem worth living" (Mathews, 1996, p. 12), for the Japanese may appear to be highly irrational for Americans who believe in autonomy. Influenced by Shinto animism and Buddhist enlightenment, Japanese believe in harmony, identity, and non-separation and model those beliefs in the home.

Americans tend to define others by achievement. If they disapprove of beliefs or personal lives of individuals, Americans may separate the personality from the person's actions.

The harmony initially promoted within the Japanese family that leads to cooperation and identity with others in school and at work is quite different from the American orientation that enables individuals to work well together despite their differences. "It is this trait of seeing others as fragmented, combined with the desire to achieve, that provides Americans with the motivation to cooperate" (Stewart & Bennett, 1991, p. 139). The preservation of harmonious relationships is imperative for a healthy Japanese mentality.

"With boundaries rigid and forms fixed, the problem for the Japanese lies in lack of harmony with the outside. In the American situation, the boundaries and forms are loose; potential problems lie in lack of adequate expression and assertion of self" (Goldstein & Tamura, 1975, p. 172). When there is no struggle against any condition and the mind is in perfect harmony with all, life is worth living for the Japanese. The Western spirit of individualism is the antithesis of the Japanese absorption into the group. Early childhood training within the Japanese family includes respect for tradition and consistently reinforces the cultural preference for harmony. American individualism encourages a flexible, adaptive personality. "On the other hand, a tradition-directed social character is well suited for learning by drill; being more responsive to shame than guilt, it fits a culture that possesses great behavioral stability" (Honigmann, 1967, p. 147).

Educational Environment

Ruth Benedict (1946) describes Japanese life as compartmentalized into spheres, each with its own code of conduct or specific way of behaving or performing an activity. Upon recognition of this trait in the behavior of a Japanese intern teacher who lived in my home for nine months, I can more easily understand why Japanese students are often reluctant to take risks. Special training techniques called *shikata* or *kata* enable Japanese people to always know what is correct for any given situation whether in the theatrical art of *kabuki* or the simple formality of removing shoes at the entrance to a Japanese home (DeMente, 1993; Gunji, 1987; Kerr, 1996). The *kata* mentality tends to isolate and separate experiences as well as to remove doubt about what is right or proper for any situation. Japanese students often hesitate to try something if uncertain about how to do

it. In contrast, American students are far more likely to engage in trial-and-error tactics or impetuous and impulsive behavior before they have conceptualized the problem. Since they do not want to fail or to bring any attention to themselves by making a mistake, Japanese students will not take risks. They want to do things correctly the first time and tend to withdraw or feign indifference if they do not understand. The *kata* mentality conditions Japanese students to sacrifice individuality and independence, traits encouraged within the American system of education, toward common goals of harmony, sameness, and cooperation that are valued so highly in Japanese culture. Knowing the *kata* insulates Japanese people from ambiguous situations that cause them to feel uncomfortable.

In American classrooms where native speakers of the target language and language learners are brought together, many variations in settings are observed. In educational environments where teachers direct instructional activities but allow students a considerable amount of autonomy over their learning, numerous opportunities are available for peer interaction. In tightly-structured classrooms controlled by the teacher, opportunities for sociability are limited. In structured classrooms, teachers value “attentiveness, verbal memory, and pattern recognition” (Fillmore, 1991). In addition to the structure of the educational setting, other sources of classroom variation are found in the learners themselves: their personalities and social skills. Compounding an already complex situation, Fillmore (1991) believes that “if learner characteristics are predictive of variation in second-language learning, they are not predictive in any simple or straightforward manner” (p. 51). However, within the educational setting, Fillmore

(1991) identifies three essential components for successful learning of the target language: motivated learners, proficient and knowledgeable speakers, and a social setting conducive to language experiences and learning (Fillmore, 1991).

Language Proficiency

Although there appears to be some relationship between language usage and its influence on thought patterns and behavior, what the precise nature of that relationship is has yet to be determined. Proficiency in English seems to play some role in the acculturation process for *kaigaishijo*. Debates between colleagues surface, however, when one group fervently believes that there is no causal relationship between language and culture (Sapir, 1921) while the other side believes that language causes group members to behave in certain ways (Carroll, 1956). We know that languages "cut up experience in different ways, just as they differ phonologically, morphologically, and syntactically" (Landar, 1966, p. 239). Language would seem to be an important tool for understanding any culture. Japanese students who have acquired some proficiency in English certainly appear to conduct themselves with more confidence and self-assurance than those who arrive without any English language skills. Furthermore, educators continue to champion the rights of minorities as they attempt to convince legislators of the need for various programs, including submersion, immersion, and federally-funded transitional bilingual education (TBE) programs (Spener, 1988). The programs undeniably are assimilationist and each has its deficiencies and strengths. The fact remains that educators believe in their efficacy as means to enable students whose first language is not English to be able to participate in English-speaking classrooms.

Theoretically, the rapidity with which second-language learners acquire the language of the host country is due to three factors: (1) differences in internal cognitive states; (2) a change in language facility, not learning ability; (3) a domain-specific acquisition device present in children's brains that is unavailable in adult brains (Bley-Vroman, 1989). Because language acquisition impacts the socialization environment and vice versa, does language also provide the key to understanding the acculturation process?

Maturation

We know that “maturation clearly implies language development” (Singleton, 1989). We also understand that the student who is learning a second language is more mature chronologically and linguistically than the first-language learner. “The interesting question is not *whether* normal maturation involves language development but what the *precise nature* of the maturational dimension of language development is” (Singleton, 1989, p. 6). Clearly, there is a relationship between maturation and language.

Maturation implies ageing, a process in which we are engaged throughout life. To compare subjects of different ages who are learning a second language, two measures are frequently used: age on arrival and length of residency. Age on arrival refers to the age at which the student entered this country and was first exposed to English as a second language. Length of residency refers to the months or years of exposure to a second language within as well as outside the classroom setting. An important finding emerges when these variables are compared. Research indicates that students between the ages of 8 and 12 not only acquire second language skills more rapidly than any other age group

but also “maintain a greater cognitive advantage over young children initiating second language acquisition at 4 to 7 years of age” (Collier, 1989, p. 514).

Individual differences in early childhood experiences and growth rate impact readiness for instruction (Elkind, 1997). Maturational readiness, the amount of interaction with speakers of the host language, and command of the second language significantly impact Japanese children’s acculturation into American patterns (Minoura, 1979). Until they reach approximately age 11, children are not mature enough to notice meanings underlying interactions that may differ between cultures. Consequently, young children simply imitate behaviors within the environment in which they find themselves (Minoura, 1979).

According to the “interdependence hypothesis,” certain “aspects of language which are interdependent across languages are those aspects which are relatively more dependent on attributes of the learner than on second language input” (Cummins & Swain, 1989). The researchers explain that grammatical skills in a second language appear to be more closely related to exposure to the language and use of the language than to cognitive or personality attributes of the learner. Personality, whether one is shy or outgoing, and cognition are learner attributes that remain relatively stable across languages (Cummins & Swain, 1989). Personality, background, and cognition appear to impact interactional style rather than grammatical proficiency in second-language acquisition (Cummins & Swain, 1989).

Cummins (1984, 1991), on the basis of studies with Japanese and Vietnamese students in Canada, established that development of skills in the first language

significantly impacts the transfer of skills across two languages. He described students who were unable to attain bilingual proficiency as “double limited.” According to Lennenberg’s (1967) “critical hypothesis,” the age at which children initially acquire language is critical to subsequent linguistic performance. Children have been unable to acquire the same level of competency and proficiency in a second language after the age of 10 that younger children have been able to acquire. A synthesis of research findings by Collier (1989) indicated that immigrant students between the ages of 8 and 12 “take 5 to 7 years to reach the level of average performance by native speakers” (p. 527). She argued that standardized achievement tests used to reach those assumptions are inadequate measures of language proficiency. None of this research has addressed the numerous variables nor confirmed their impact on second-language learning, academic achievement, or acculturation.

Summary

One starts from the premise that *kaigaishijo* are involuntary minorities who may experience some degree of marginality upon their arrival in the United States. During their temporary residency, *kaigaishijo* acculturate to various degrees. The value system Japanese children learn at home, particularly from the mother, and the dependency she instills in them predispose them to a tradition-directed social character conducive to cultivating harmonious relationships. This orientation prepares Japanese children for absorption into the group. In America, *kaigaishijo* encounter a new language and socialization within the school that emphasizes individualism. Like immigrants who tend to assimilate, *kaigaishijo* appear to engage in some sort of blending of cultural differences

during acculturation, a process that is somewhat difficult to measure.

The educational environment, acquisition of English, maturation, and personality apparently impact the acculturation process. We know that there is a relationship between language and maturation attributable to genetic traits and environmental influences (Chomsky, 1968; Lovell, 1971; Minoura, 1979). Research indicates that age and length of residency impact language acquisition (Collier, 1989). If the research is accurate, there is also a relationship between exposure to and use of the target language and proficiency in grammar (Cummins & Swain, 1989). Personality, a stable trait across cultures, affects interactional style (Cummins & Swain, 1989). To what extent, if any, are language and acculturation related? To what degree, then, does personality affect acculturation? My study attempts to answer these questions.

CHAPTER 3

Decoding Inscrutability

The school secretary asked if I had time to see the mother of one of our Japanese students in fifth grade. When I invited the mother into my office, she immediately apologized for appearing without an appointment and for being so casually dressed in jeans and a red sweater. She explained that she was on her way to our school media center for her weekly volunteer time but apologetically asked if I could advise her about a problem concerning her son, Matsuo.

"Please tell me what's on your mind," I ventured. "Are things going well for Mat in the classroom?" Wringing her hands, the mother said she hardly knew how to explain the situation. I scanned her anguished face for some clues. She crossed her arms, averted her gaze, and then looked back at me with eyes brimmed with tears. My initial inclination was to reach out to her, but I stifled that urge based upon my knowledge of the Japanese aversion to touching in public. With a few sentences uttered in fractured English, she nearly encapsulated my research problem:

"Mat--he ashamed of me! He not want me speak Japanese in front of American friends. He feel frustrated about American history. He not want to share anything Japanese with anyone. He want only American things. He want to be pilot in American Air Force. He not like flat face. He not want to be Japanese!"

From an hierarchical culture where status, appropriate attire, and *kata* (appropriate actions) are of utmost importance in every situation, the Japanese mother was acting somewhat impulsively as a result of her distress over her perception of her son's problems. At least twice during the conversation she apologized for her casual attire, claiming that she had not planned to meet with a school administrator.

In light of what I understand of the concepts of *tatemae* and *honne*, public and private face, I suspect that the mother felt she had "lost face" when she rushed into my office and revealed to me her troubling and private thoughts concerning her son's acculturation process. During the episode, she had become emotional in public. The personal *honne*, characterized as the individual's true feeling, is not usually shared with *gaijin* (outsiders). Unlike many Americans who often impulsively blurt out personal feelings with casual acquaintances as well as with friends and relatives, Japanese are socialized within the family environment to express private feelings only within *uchi* (inside) situations (Hendry, 1996). Instead of sharing her concerns with her husband, this Japanese mother had come to her son's school and had impulsively and emotionally expressed her private feelings to an American educator.

The Japanese mother's actions revealed that both mother and son were becoming acculturated. The mother demonstrated through her impulsiveness, rather than her Japanese sense of reserve, a rather typical American response to a problem. Her description of her son indicated that he had acculturated in terms of peer reactions, academic success, career aspiration, and recognition of ethnic physical characteristics. The symbols indicative of becoming acculturated included his preference for the use of

the English language in public, a desire to understand American history, an aspiration for an American career, and disdain for his facial features.

Theoretical Underpinnings

In many respects, the aforementioned episode demonstrated that both mother and son were acculturating. As I observed the process of acculturation for *kaigiashijo* attending an American school, I reported my findings in terms of language and behaviors “whose meanings must be grasped if the culture and its principles are to be understood” (Willis et al., 1992, p.31). Most investigations of this sort tend to be either structural approaches or psychological analyses (Braroe, 1975). Structural approaches are more concerned with the impact of institutions on individuals when different cultures contact each other. Psychological approaches examine individual experiences but tend to ignore the transformations that occur within specific cultural contexts. My research, as it turned out, was strongly influenced by the field of culture and personality (Cousins, 1989; Guba, 1990; Honigmann, 1967; Minoura, 1979; Shweder, 1991). I conceptualize the human being as a meaning-seeking animal who communicates through the use of symbols and learns to act within a cultural context through interaction with other human beings. Therefore, I am drawn to theoretical models concerned with the symbolic, because I believe that the human being learns actively to select from recognized meanings and values rather than to react only to physical stimuli within specific cultural contexts. My research problem, conceptualized primarily as a study of culture and personality, is also influenced by the symbolic interactionist approach. Within those parameters, I define culture as socially shared and transmitted knowledge evidenced or symbolized in art and

artifact; personality as overt and covert behavior resulting from social patterning within a given cultural context; symbolic interactionism is a methodological position that “sees meanings as social products, as creations that are formed in and through the defining activities of people as they interact” (Blumer, 1969, p. 5).

The way I view the world provides a framework for this research. My philosophical bent is one basis for the articulation of my thoughts as well as for the way I think schools should be organized.

“As children we emerge as selves not only through our particular personal world, but also through a particular language and set of social practices that ever after condition us in our comprehension of ourselves and our world” (Mathews, 1996, p. 209).

Accepting Mathew’s (1996) premise that people are “servants of their early symbolic shaping” (p. 208), I am particularly intrigued by the process that *kaigaishijo* undergo during their temporary residence and education in America. When *kaigaishijo* perform at average and above-average levels in all subject areas, they no longer need services of an ESL teacher. What, then, accounts for their acculturation? Through the selection and examination of a number of variables related to the acculturation process for Japanese sojourners, I searched for patterns inherent in situations, reactions, events, and relationships in which *kaigaishijo* are involved as I observed this phenomenon within an intermediate school setting.

As an educator who believes that a relationship exists between societal changes and educational change, I am probably most closely aligned with the reconceptualists who tend to be socially sensitive. My philosophy, based on a “good belief,” is utilitarian:

A good belief is distinguished by its usefulness in suggesting other good beliefs.

It must be fruitful. It must lead to new suggestions, new hypotheses, more accurate observations, better discrimination between facts and propaganda, more reliable forecasts of probabilities for the future. (Hopkins, 1941, p. 191)

Evolving from a background in the arts and humanities, coupled with new insights from the social sciences, my philosophy is conceptually aligned with that which Maxine Greene (1990) calls “personal expression” and “reflective self-consciousness.”

Concerned with personal autonomy and psychologies of consciousness, I am a reconceptualist, a reclothed reconstructionist, who tends to be child-centered, humanistic, and concerned with societal issues. Reconceptualists are typically global thinkers who “stress broad problems and issues, and they attempt to reflect, refine, rethink, reinterpret, and reconceptualize the field of curriculum” (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1988, p. 57).

Although it is doubtful that I reconceptualize anything, I am interested in issues that have philosophical, psychological, social, political, and economic implications as they relate to education. The reconceptualist’s approach “is enriching and introduces aesthetics, existentialist, and social science procedures [into school models] that are not sensitive to the inner feelings and experiences of people” (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1988, p. 57).

Reconceptualism enables me to envision how schools, if they were truly democratic, could meet the needs of all students through content and curriculum experiences “that emphasize language and communication skills, personal biographies, art, poetry, dance, drama, literature, psychology, ethics [and]...subjects not part of the normal curriculum or certainly not the major foci” (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1988, p. 57). Through reflective self-

consciousness, the aim of the reconceptualist “is to move from knowledge to activity, from reflections to action” (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1988, p. 57). My obligation as an educator and a reconceptualist is to use the information from this research to collaborate with other educators in the creation of a dialogue sensitive to the needs of children who, by virtue of birth and the trend toward globalization of business, are involuntary minorities. Tied directly to my data analysis of the acculturation process for *kaigaishijo* is the implicit plea for equality of opportunity through improved educational processes.

Acculturation

The major question that my study addressed can be phrased as follows: What accounts for the acculturation process of *kaigaishijo*? Acculturation has been defined as a state and a process in which sojourners are involved during their period of residence in the host country. Newcomers may use many strategies as they acculturate (Berry et al., 1988). When *kaigaishijo* have attained a comfortable congruency between their native country and the host country, they have acculturated (Clayton, 1996).

A review of the literature on acculturation appeared somewhat ambiguous and less than definitive. Observing *kaigaishijo* within the American public school setting offered an opportunity to study the process but raised many questions about social relationships at home and school as well as issues related to maturation. What I discovered, although it does not contradict her research, appears to contrast with Minoura’s findings. Minoura (1979) postulated that there is a sensitive period between the ages of 9 and 15 when Japanese children living in America acquire a cultural meaning system. In other words, age is the critical factor in the acculturation process. I learned

that in addition to maturational differences the uniqueness of each child had to be considered within the contexts of home and school environments. Furnham (1988) advised that future studies regarding the adjustment of sojourners should take into account individual differences. The phenomenon appeared to be far more complex than I had anticipated. To comprehensively understand the children's experiences, I had to simultaneously and systematically investigate a number of factors that appeared to shape each child's social personality. As illustrated in Figure 3.1, three broad areas derived from the literature appeared to impact the formation of social personality: family situation, educational environment, and maturation.

Family situation. Instead of assuming that the family is an independent entity that acts on the child or stimulates the child's every behavior, I investigated this structure under the assumption that the child interprets and gives meaning to the symbols s/he recognizes within that structure. The family situation (see figure 3.1) includes the household hierarchy (Hendry, 1996; Iwao, 1993; White, 1988), language and cultural patterns (Goldstein & Tamura, 1975), length of stay (Furnham, 1988), and socio-economic status (Goodman, 1990). The child is not consciously making an effort to sort out or name what is happening but is giving the symbolic concepts meaning as s/he interprets their suitability to her/his on-going activities (Blumer, 1969). Making decisions on the basis of these judgments "is what is meant by interpretation or acting on the basis of symbols" (Blumer, 1969, p. 80). As I thought about how the family situation impacts the development of social personality, I formulated related questions.

| Factors impacting social personality | Japanese culture | American culture |
|--------------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Family situation | | |
| | Household hierarchy (Hendry, 1996; Iwao, 1993; White, 1988) | |
| | Language and cultural patterns (Goldstein & Tamura, 1975) | |
| | Length of stay (Furnham, 1988) | |
| | Socio-economic status (Goodman, 1990) | |
| Educational environment | | |
| | Language competency (Spener, 1988; Clayton, 1996; Cummins, 1984, 1991) | |
| | Student interaction with teachers and peers (Fillmore, 1991) | |
| | Self-contained classroom | |
| | Resources (art, music, etc.) | |
| | ESL classroom | |
| | School and community values (Benjamin, 1997; DeMente, 1993; Kerr, 1996) | |
| | Customs, etiquette, and attire | |
| | Extracurricular activities | |
| Maturation | | |
| | Age and grade level of student (Minoura, 1979) | |
| | Language acquisition (Bley-Vroman, 1989; Chomsky, 1975; Singleton, 1989) | |

Figure 3.1. Contrast in culture and personality traits between Japanese and American students

How does the social structure within the family unit impact the acculturation process? Are there differences in household hierarchy between Japanese and American families? If language and cultural patterns are related, how does the language used within the home impact the acculturation process? Does the length of stay within a culture impede, accelerate, or have any impact upon the acculturation process? What effect does the socio-economic status of the family have upon the emerging social personalities of the children? These queries enlarged the parameters framed by my original eight questions (see p. 14).

The research concentrated on some areas more than others. For instance, there appeared to be little literature pertaining to family socio-economic status and its relation to acculturation. *Kaigaishijo*, by and large, are children of business persons or scholars on temporary assignments outside of Japan (Goodman, 1990). They are classified as sojourners whose stay in the host country usually varies from six months to five years (Furnham, 1988). They are involuntary minorities (Ogbu, 1987) who are in the host country not of their own accord. Length of residency, a salient factor to be considered for immigrants, appeared to have little impact, if my observations are accurate, upon the acculturation process of *kaigaishijo*.

An examination of language and cultural patterns within the family revealed that language incorporated speech levels and distinctions that, in turn, imparted value systems quite different from those learned by American children (Goldstein & Tamura, 1975). The culture learned within the home promoted harmonious relationships instead of Western individuality and self-assertion (Goldstein & Tamura, 1975).

The literature was replete with differences between Japanese and American family structure and parenting styles that necessarily impact household hierarchy. The role of the mother in ensuring successful lives for her children cannot be underestimated (Hendry, 1996; Iwao, 1993; White, 1988).

Educational environment. Like the family, the educational environment appeared to influence the development of each child's social personality. An examination of the many factors that could have been included revealed that language competency (Spener, 1988; Clayton, 1996; Cummins, 1984, 1991), student interaction with teachers and peers (Fillmore, 1991), and school and community values (Benjamin, 1997; DeMente, 1993; Kerr, 1996) seemed to have the greatest impact upon social personality as the acculturation process proceeded. To what degree the children actually took into account their surrounding conditions and the demands upon them remained to be investigated.

I learned that language programs, including bilingual, submersion, and immersion were all assimilationist in nature (Spener, 1988). From my observations and the literature, I had already ascertained that *kaigaishijo* acculturate but do not assimilate (Goodman, 1990). A synthesis of the research established the fact that competency in the first language imparts the transfer of skills to the second language (Cummins, 1984, 1991). Clayton (1996) stressed the importance of language as the key to acculturation. Her deduction, however, appeared highly simplistic given all of the other variables that seemed to impact the complex process of acculturation.

With the exception of Fillmore (1991), pertinent research seemed scant regarding day-to-day interactions between second-language learners, Japanese in this case, and their

American teachers and peers. As my study revealed, these interactions at least were moderately important in the process of acculturation. The *kata* mentality, explained in the literature, ensured the correct way to act within the school and community (Benjamin, 1996; DeMente, 1993; Kerr, 1996). What happened for instance when Japanese children did not understand the expectations in an American classroom? Furnham (1988) substantiated that culture shock, associated with feelings of marginality and alienation and experienced in different degrees by sojourners, was one reaction. Although portrayed as a negative experience by most researchers, culture shock, as experienced by sojourners, might be more or less intense depending upon factors that might inoculate against such shock (Furnham, 1988). Certain personality types for instance might look on the experience of living in another country as challenging and, despite the initial shock, find ways to adjust. My observations seemed to point in that direction.

Given the complexity of components that appear to affect the acculturation process, including home, school, and maturation, I found that a straightforward answer was complicated further by the fact that each child is unique. A child's personality, if we trust the literature, remains stable across cultures (Cummins & Swain, 1986). That child's personality appears to have bearing upon her/his responses to the cultural environment. Those responses can result in negative phases (see figure 5.2) that may be manifested in the form of culture shock (Furnham, 1988), marginality (Stonequist, 1961; Goodman, 1994), alienation (Horney, 1991), or withdrawal (Oberg, 1960). I witnessed neither oppositional social identity nor cultural inversion (Ogbu, 1987) as the children acculturated. *Kaigaishijo*, as the case studies illustrate, were always welcomed in every

classroom or extracurricular activity. The one child who apparently experienced culture shock as a negative state, followed by a period of marginality, seemed to alienate himself from those around him before he finally withdrew into his private world of artistic expression. He was, by all accounts, an introvert. On the other hand, a female who experienced culture shock, quickly pulled herself from that negative state to begin the positive phases of acculturation: adjustment (Furnham, 1988), accommodation (Sung, 1987), adaptivity (Hess & Azuma, 1991), and congruency (Clayton, 1996). The girl's personality was described as extroverted.

Although various writers have emphasized different aspects of acculturation, including the acquisition of new customs, etiquette, and attire (Benjamin, 1997; Hendry, 1996) which are undeniably part of the process, they have not attempted to interpret the complex relationship between personality and acculturation. The challenge remained for me to attempt to explain the variability in the acculturation process among *kaigaishijo*: Why are some Japanese children more successful in acculturating than others even though all of them face barriers in culture, language, and educational opportunities? More and more the study of acculturation also appeared to be a study of the development of social personality that I define as a combination of overt and covert behavior resulting from social patterning within a given cultural context. Our rapidly-changing world, as Honigmann (1967) suggests, requires a flexible personality that takes cues from the environment or situation in which it finds itself. As I observed the children, I also surveyed some of the literature on maturation.

Maturation. Although maturation is definitely a factor that impacts the development of social personality, it is not the same type of social structure typified by the family and the school. It is a concept somewhat difficult to describe and, consequently, is marked symbolically by age and each student's grade level as well as the developmental milestone of language acquisition (Chomsky, 1975; Cummins, 1984; Fillmore, 1991; Minoura, 1979). As I thought about the concept of maturation, I began to wonder whether or not the age of the student upon her/his arrival in the new culture had a specific impact upon social personality. Minoura (1979) postulated that age is a factor. According to her findings, the population I was looking at should have had no difficulty acculturating or acquiring what Minoura refers to as the "cultural grammar" of the new environment. Yet, one of the four children of my study, was apparently experiencing more difficulty acculturating than any of the other children.

The literature was not definitive about possible relationships among the phases of the acculturation process and developmental rates associated with childhood. If, for example, a child was already speaking Japanese before s/he arrived in America, that ability should have facilitated the acquisition of a second language (Bley-Vroman, 1989). In turn, the ability to speak the target language should have facilitated the child's adjustment and eventual integration into the host country. How could I explain the fact that a child who had learned to read and write English would not speak or interact with his peers and was obviously uncomfortable in his third year at the intermediate school?

For my final analysis I deduced that maturation, the meeting of developmental milestones, was in a different category than the other factors I was considering. It would

have had substantial impact upon the acculturation process if any one of the four *kaigaishijo* of this study had experienced developmental delays. For example it would have been important to consider maturation if a child had not acquired rudimentary language by the age of three. In other words, developmental milestones must have been attained for acculturation to proceed.

I have come to believe that it is one thing to discover a solution to a cultural problem but quite another to understand variability in a process. My study has largely been atheoretical with few theories to guide my research. If I have borrowed somewhat from the perspective of symbolic interactionism, then I have used it only as an approach to interpret our world of multiple, socially-constructed realities (Blumer, 1969). I have necessarily called upon my emotional intelligence, a concept related to empathy and intuition (Goleman, 1995), to understand what the children experience during the process of acculturation. Based on the literature, I cannot say definitively that I know why some *kaigaishijo* acculturate easily and others have a difficult time. From my observations, it appears that the variability on the continuum toward complete acculturation depends upon each child's personality. There is not a great deal of evidence to substantiate this line of thinking. When three of the four *kaigaishijo* acculturated easily and one, who was by all accounts an introverted child, did not easily acculturate, it appeared that the process depends upon personality. The variability cannot be easily attributed to one factor, however, without consideration of the interactions among many factors involved in acculturation.

Emerging Insights

Ethnography appeared to offer the most consonance between the way I view the world and the phenomenon under scrutiny. I learned that ethnography is quite similar, if not identical, to participant observation, the procedure I used. My selected methodology appeared congruent with “the concept of culture as acquired knowledge [which] has much in common with symbolic interaction” (Spradley, 1980). Through a constant comparison of all the interactions between and among the children and the concepts embodied in the symbols or factors listed in Figure 3.1, I studied and analyzed the data in an attempt to draw preliminary conclusions. I took into account the conditions and the demands upon the children and how they interpreted their situations and acted accordingly. By the tenets of symbolic interactionism, “a communicative process in which the individual notes things, assesses them, gives them a meaning, and decides to act on the basis of meaning” (Blumer, 1969, p. 18), I began to understand how *kaigaishijo* interpreted some of the symbols, such as language and attire, and how that understanding influenced their behavior. The case studies illustrated that certain factors, such as clothing, length of residency, and even facility with the target language appeared relatively unimportant on the continuum toward complete acculturation. Other factors emerged as more important: the mother’s role, educational expectations, family value of education, and artistic endeavors. Finally, the two factors of personality and a receptive attitude repeatedly appeared to have the greatest impact of all on progress toward complete acculturation. The case studies that follow, coupled with artifacts and anecdotal comments, provided the basis for my emerging explanation.

To ensure depth in this investigation, I operated from a basic definition of culture as “the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behavior” (Spradley, 1989, p. 6). This offered the initial corridor to my understanding of the children’s experiences. I needed to understand how enculturation within the Japanese family differed from that experienced within an American family and how that impacted the formation of social personality. An effective way for my determination of what was happening entailed the use of a method Geertz (1973) calls “thick description” which seems complicated. “Culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviors, institutions, or processes can be casually attributed; it is a context, something within which they can be intelligibly--that is--*thickly*--described” (Geertz, 1973, p. 14).

Entering their lives and attempting to understand the children’s orientation to the educational environment via the participation observation approach enabled me to describe and interpret for the reader my understanding of the acculturation process as it proceeded on a daily basis for *kaigaishijo*. This approach enabled me to “actively enter the worlds of people being studied” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 124). I did more than merely “tell” the reader what a Japanese child was doing; rather, I tried to “show” the reader what the behavior means. “When culture is examined from this perspective, the ethnographer is faced with a series of interpretations of life, common-sense understandings, that are complex and difficult to separate from each other” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 39).

Emotional intelligence. Finally, to describe what was taking place in the acculturation process for *kaigaishijo* and to relate what I was witnessing to acculturation

and social personality, I applied, as I have already mentioned, emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995). This is not a concept I selected arbitrarily from a book nor is it something I decided was lacking in my personality or character that needed to be developed to enable me to do this study. Emotional intelligence is related to common sense and intuition. Research corroborates that females tend generally to be more empathic than males (Lorber, 1994; Tannen, 1990). I would argue, however, from personal experience that not all females possess a high degree of emotional intelligence and that some males are more emotionally intelligent than some females. Qualitative research, specifically participant observation, requires of the researcher, female or male, a high degree of emotional intelligence.

During interview situations, I specifically applied such hallmarks of emotional intelligence as self-awareness, verbal and nonverbal communication, empathy, intuition, and social deftness (Goleman, 1995). The analysis of data required other aspects of emotional intelligence including impulse control, self-motivation, and persistence (Goleman, 1995). Shaping the research and bringing coherence to the study required the emotionally-intelligent skills of interpretive ability, understanding the perspectives of others, delay of gratification, problem-solving, and decision-making (Goleman, 1995).

To accomplish an endeavor of this magnitude, I learned that the researcher must be both intellectually confident and able to understand and explain the feelings of others. I drew not only from my survey of the literature but also from more than twenty years of experience as an elementary educator in my effort to establish the framework for this study. To the degree that I am endowed with both cognitive and emotional intelligence, I

applied my abilities to this task. I learned that it was as important to be attuned to my own feelings as it was to what the children might be feeling. My endeavor is consistent with my goal as an educator to help children, as they develop their potential, to become comfortable and competent within their learning environment.

As I tried to understand and to interpret what *kaigaishijo* experience, I formulated numerous questions that appeared to be related to culture, personality, and acculturation. As one who is socially sensitive, I conceptualized the study in terms of the factors drawn from the literature that seemed most likely to impact the formation of social personality: family situation, educational environment, and maturation.

Procedures

Site. The site selected is in the southeastern section of a Middle Atlantic state that has attracted a number of Japanese businesses. The study was conducted within an intermediate school setting in which the researcher served as an administrator. Observations were made within classrooms, resource settings, and the cafeteria in the intermediate school and classrooms at the Japanese Saturday school located in a nearby city. Since periodic classroom observations are a regular part of an administrator's duties, visits to classes were considered neither intrusive nor excessive.

Institutional permission. The school principal, school system superintendent, and director of research gave their permission for me to interview and observe the students and teachers in the school in which I served as an administrator. The superintendent assured me that I would be allowed to remain at the intermediate school for one additional year to complete the study. I submitted my proposal, copies of the interview

protocol, and parental consent forms to the director of research for the school system whose duties include approving research proposals for studies by teachers and administrators. Upon receipt of his approval, I proceeded with interviews and classroom observations. Due to the fact that I am dealing with human subjects, I also presented all pertinent and required information to the institutional review board of the College of William and Mary, the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects, whose responsibility it is to ensure compliance with policies of the institution as well as with applicable state and federal regulations for conducting ethical research. Interviews were scheduled at school or in the students' homes. The intermediate school was selected not only because Japanese students were enrolled there but also because the researcher was an administrator at the site.

Participant selection and permission. Three levels of Japanese students, listed as follows, were consulted for the purposes of this research: (1) students who have recently arrived in America and are enrolled in the school where the researcher is an administrator; (2) students who have attended school in America for at least one academic year; (3) high school students who had progressed to a different level of acculturation. Parents signed consent forms (Appendix C) giving permission for the researcher to interview their children as well as to conduct observations during the acculturation process.

Tools. Interviews and observations were used to gather information from the students. An interview protocol, a copy of the parental consent form for minor children to participate, and a series of questions for students appear in the appendices.

I allotted in my schedule approximately an hour each time I conversed with a participant. I attempted to establish a good rapport with each one within an environment conducive to friendly conversation. Since talking with an administrator, or being summoned to the school office, could have been intimidating experiences for students, I explained to them and to their parents my reasons for asking questions. Permission for audio taping the interviews of participants, with their understanding that such taping was done for clarification and triangulation rather than for evaluative procedures, was requested of and given by parents. All families were informed that their expert information was vital to an understanding of this phenomenon. Students were encouraged to verbalize their feelings and to respond to questions derived from my conceptual framework that related to their orientation within the acculturation process. Participants were informed that they were not obligated to answer all the questions and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. I discussed issues of confidentiality and anonymity with both students and their parents and assigned pseudonyms.

As I observed in the classrooms in which Japanese students were assigned, I tracked the acculturation process by recording student interactions with teachers and peers. I looked for use of and competency in the target language, changes in customs, etiquette, and attire, and student interactions with those around them. Since I often photographed events in the school, I also took candid pictures of *kiagiashijo* engaging in lunch in the cafeteria or participating in activities within resource settings such as physical education or ESL. These visual artifacts assisted me as I tracked the children's progress on the continuum toward complete acculturation.

Data collection. Guided by interpretive research that focuses “on intentional, meaningful behavior that is by definition historically, socially, and culturally relative” (Schwandt, 1994, p. 130), I recorded germane data from August through early March. In addition to consulting the literature, I drew upon a variety of other sources in writing this study: my own interviews with the participants, interviews with teachers of *kaigaishijo*, personal communications with Japanese businessmen, my observations in classrooms and resource settings, and my conversations with the parents of *kaigaishijo*. One Japanese mother’s inability to speak English precluded an interview. The only contact with one father occurred when the teacher invited me to a parent-teacher conference. Consequently, some of the information, particularly data regarding the value that certain Japanese families involved in this study place on education, came through my observations and information provided by the children themselves.

I was specifically guided by the conceptual frameworks and methodological procedures for ethnographic and case study approaches used by Clayton (1996), Minoura (1979), Ogbu (1978), and Yin (1984) who have studied the progress of certain students in specific educational settings over specified amounts of time. Within the subsettings of self-contained classrooms, resource settings, and Japanese Saturday school, I observed and described interactions between *kaigaishijo*, their teachers, and peers.

For purposes of triangulation, I interviewed Japanese high school students in addition to the four *kaigaishijo* at the intermediate school. Triangulation through peer review, interested reviews by colleagues and outsiders, observations, and my interviews were compared and cross-checked for consistency. To establish reliability, verbatim

accounts of participants' conversations during interviews were recorded on audio tape and transcribed to ensure accuracy as the research progressed. Methodological triangulation proved to be invaluable in that it blended well with the definition of case study as "empirical inquiry that: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (Yin, 1984, p. 23)

To increase construct validity, I used multiple sources of evidence, including observations, on-site and in-home interviews, documentation artifacts consisting of personal notes made during the course of a regular school day, pertinent newspaper articles, and photographs taken at school. A Japanese intern teacher provided insights to supplement all of my other sources of information.

Students were interviewed several times each. Initially, I interviewed the four children at the intermediate school and the Japanese students at the neighboring high school. These interviews took place either in the school or in students' homes with parents present. I used a basic set of questions for the initial interview (Appendix D). The number of subsequent times that I was able to interview the four students of this study depended upon my professional responsibilities as well as the willingness of students to participate on given days and their ability to answer questions. The female *kaigaishijo* (Yoko) who had resided in America for the least amount of time experienced the greatest difficulty answering questions. Subsequent interviews with her were conducted in the ESL classroom with the ESL teacher present. These interviews and conversations involved opportunities for her to interpretively illustrate her answers with

crayons and colored pencils. The male in third grade (Ken) and the female in fifth grade (Maki) responded eloquently to questions and participated enthusiastically in our frequent conversations held during their ESL classes after the initial interview. The least cooperative of the four children was the one who had resided in American for the greatest amount of time (Tsuneo). In every context, including an interview in which both of his sisters were present, the boy appeared reticent to answer questions. When he chose to answer, he used only a word or two.

Data analysis. After I had collected the data during the circumscribed time, I began to analyze it in February, 1998, in order to give coherent meaning to such details as gestures, drawings, clothing, and even colloquialisms in students' speech. I drew preliminary conclusions and began to report them in a manner consistent with the requirements of this institution of higher learning. For data gathering and analysis, I followed the procedures of Miles and Huberman (1994). To determine patterns within the acculturation process, I analyzed all transcriptions and documentation gathered through my observations and interviews. I analyzed each of the factors (Fig. 3.1) that are supposed to impact social personality in light of each child. In a comparison of interviews, observations, and documentation artifacts, I ferreted out answers to most of my research questions. Although each case is an individual, I searched for the patterns of acculturation to determine regularities according to context. To determine patterns in the acculturation process and to reach conclusions from a coherent sample, I looked for interactions that focused on the same processes between teachers and students, between students and their grade-level peers, and among family members. The entire process of

investigation has been more one of creating a picture that was emerging through patterns rather than one of putting together a puzzle whose picture I already knew.

Conclusions

My initial questions served as probes to understanding a context replete with information. I analyzed and refined the data that I had sorted and filed under the three broad categories that address family situation, educational environment, and maturation. I continued to refine data, grouping it under subcategories that enabled me to draw preliminary conclusions. I asked my university advisor, a respected anthropologist and educator, to read and critique data for trustworthiness. I understood the necessity for my interpretations to be trustworthy in order for colleagues to be able to implement research results "in the range of ways that trusted outcomes can be used--to confirm, expand, and inform their own work--and thereby contribute to the accumulative nature of...knowledge" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 46).

What I have attempted to outline in this chapter is how the parts of this model figure in the process of acculturation. Again, my attempt to find a simple explanation for the acculturation of *kaigaishijo* has not been particularly fruitful. The states and phases of acculturation can only be understood when all the components of the model are considered, compared, and analyzed. Personality and a receptive attitude appear to be the most important factors for successful acculturation. I offer this model only as a proposal. I do not propose that it is generalizable to other populations. As I continue to work on it, however, I encourage others to test it.

CHAPTER 4

Four *Kaigaishijo* in an American School

“Do you have a moment to read this letter from Yoko’s¹ father?” Deb, a fourth-grade teacher, asked me on the morning of the second day of school. “It makes me sad,” she continued before I could answer her question. “Here is a bright child who is already frustrated. I wish I could speak enough Japanese to at least put her at ease. I could not tease a smile from her yesterday. What can we do? She’s from a different world!”

Interested in learning what the Japanese father had written, I unfolded the sheet of notebook paper she had extended. In legible cursive, the Sumitomo engineer had responded to a note of welcome Deb had sent home with Yoko. The note from Yoko’s father read as follows:

We thank you very much for your starting of our daughter teaching. We answer to you about [Yoko]. [Yoko] was born and grown up until she was 8 in Japan. That is, she just been staying in the U. S. only a year. She has three other sisters (which is 6 years, 3 years, and one years...4 sisters) and she is the elder one. She always takes care other sisters very well. Her interests? I would say many things such as songs, TV, TV game, playing wear, and so on. But, studying point of view, I think she is much interested in Science such as wildlife. She likes the

¹Pseudonyms are used for all participants’ names.

U. S. A. and likes to go to school. But, today, she has just cried for the reason of she cannot understand the English, seemed other students doing well, and felt only she could not do well. After all, she has soon recovered. So, I don't worry very much. I think she can enjoy the school life of learning and playing with friends while she has sometimes communication problem or some culture shock. In addition, of course, she is a girls of likes playing much more than studying as usual. We appreciate this kind of communication with you. We thank you very much and hope you good teaching, and hope our daughter [Yoko] be a good student. (pi-9.3.97)

I reassured the teacher that, as a school administrator, I would assist her in gathering resources and in asking for advice from the ESL teacher and the division supervisor for ESL and foreign languages. A caring and nurturing educator, Deb wiped her eyes with a tissue and apologetically mumbled something about her emotional involvement with our Japanese students. I reminded her that it was not by default that Yoko had been assigned to her class. Deb had taught two other Japanese students the previous academic year. In turn, she said she felt less confident in her abilities this year without the Japanese intern teacher whose assistance with translating proved invaluable last year. With neither a translator nor a bilingual program in place, our intermediate school has managed to offer one hour of daily tutorial assistance to all children who have enrolled whose first language is not English. Regular classroom teachers at this intermediate school receive no training regarding cultural or language differences among students enrolled.

Later that same morning I walked into the ESL classroom while the teacher was tutoring a Japanese boy in third grade. Ken, though a new student to our school, had attended school in this district since his arrival in the United States at kindergarten age. The ESL teacher was directing a vocabulary exercise with words lifted from context in the classic tale of the ugly duckling. As she pointed to words on her list, the boy carefully copied them onto his stack of flash cards. With the teacher's assistance, Ken located each word in the student dictionary and copied its definition on the reverse side of the card.

"What do you think the -ing ending does to duckling? What does it make it?" asked the ESL teacher of the boy. The teacher nodded affirmatively when Ken smiled and told her it made the duck into a baby. As he followed the routine of writing the vocabulary words in his book and defining them, Ken demonstrated comprehension through answering with his own abbreviated definitions approved by the ESL teacher or short definitions gleaned from the dictionary.

Unable to secure an elementary classroom teaching position for which she is certified, this young woman assumed the responsibilities of ESL teacher when the position became vacant in April, 1997. Although this particular school has always hired a certified elementary education teacher to fill the ESL position, the school system does not require certification in ESL or elementary education as a prerequisite for the position. The selection of an ESL teacher, if a school requires those services based upon the population it serves, has always been the responsibility of the school principal. Hired late in the spring, this young woman has continued into the current academic year to provide

services for two Hispanic students and four *kaigaishijo* enrolled at this school. She is the seventh ESL teacher to have been hired in the seven years this school has been in existence. The discontinuity of instruction may disadvantage second-language learners.

I noticed how well Ken follows the ESL teacher's instructions but remembered that he has attended public school since kindergarten. He was neither shy nor hesitant to respond, write, or read aloud. His brief, appropriate answers demonstrated comprehension. He read as well as any other American student on his grade level and probably better than many. During this period of observation, the teacher did not read to the student. Ken asked no questions nor made any comments. He always responded respectfully when the teacher asked him a question. The teacher praised him for writing good definitions and for phonetically pronouncing unfamiliar vocabulary words.

While on my school rounds, I decided to check on the fifth-grade classroom where two *kaigaishijo* are assigned. Maki, a petite Japanese girl of 10 whose reputation as an excellent student preceded my introduction to her, and Tsuneo, a Japanese boy of 11, were sitting in the same row at the back of the class. Much to my surprise and delight, Tsuneo raised his hand to enter the classroom discussion. From all accounts, the boy seldom volunteered any information. When his teacher recognized him, Tsuneo proudly announced that in three months his family would leave America permanently. He said his father plans to remain here to continue his job as an engineer. Briefly, Tsuneo explained that he, with his mother and two older sisters, would return to Japan and attend an international school.

The intermediate school in which these *kaigaishijo* are enrolled was erected in 1991. Located in an affluent community near city administrative offices, court buildings, school administrative offices, and industrial parks, the school has consistently attracted Japanese students. Occasionally, the scarcity of single-family dwellings for sale or for rent in this particular area forces Japanese families to reside in an adjacent city, a fact that concerns the Japanese chief executive officer (CEO) at Sumitomo. Based upon his experiences with his own sons, one of whom previously attended this intermediate school and another who attends the local primary school, the CEO feels that our city's schools are more accommodating than those in a neighboring city. As CEO of Sumitomo, he is in a position to advise families who are transferred to the United States. Both he and his wife are instrumental in locating housing for arriving Japanese employees and their families and stay abreast of real estate available in the community. They also assist former *kaigaishijo* with American school records or transcripts necessary for entrance into Japanese high schools and universities. The CEO explains that these services are part of his responsibilities to the Japanese people Sumitomo employs.

Subjects

The four *kaigaishijo* currently attending the intermediate school are the subjects of this study. They are members of four different Japanese families. Eight-year-old Ken, a student in third grade, is the youngest of the four. Yoko, a student in fourth grade is 10 years old. Maki is a fifth grader whose eleventh birthday is in February. Twelve in December, Tsuneo, also in fifth grade, is the eldest of the four. Yoko's and Tsuneo's fathers are employed as engineers at Sumitomo Machinery. Maki's and Ken's fathers are

engineers at Mitsubishi Chemical. Occasionally, the mothers provide child care after school for another family's children. The only additional social contact that these four students have with each other outside the American school setting occurs at Japanese Saturday school.

Ken, the youngest of the four *kaigaishijo*, converses the most fluently in English. He arrived in the United States from Japan with his family in 1991. With the exception of attending a Japanese public school for three weeks while his family returned to Tokyo for a visit in 1996, Ken's schooling has occurred only in an American primary and this intermediate school.

Yoko, who celebrated her tenth birthday a few days before the beginning of the current school year arrived in America in 1997 and was placed in the third grade at this school on the basis of her age and Japanese report card. Her English skills have been described by both her third- and fourth-grade teachers as minimal. She has such difficulty communicating in English that she often resorts to drawing pictures and using hand signals to make herself understood. Yoko's fourth-grade teacher indicated that the student understood virtually nothing that was spoken in the classroom in September, 1997.

Ten-year-old Maki arrived in the United States when she was six years old and in first grade. She attended the local primary school before beginning third grade at this intermediate school in 1995. Currently assigned to a fifth-grade class where gifted students are clustered, Maki, according to her teacher, has appeared to be comfortable with any cooperative group to which she is assigned. Although she is described by both

her fifth-grade teacher and the ESL teacher as competent in her English skills in the fall of 1997, Maki has continued to receive ESL services. Both her classroom and ESL teacher justified their decision to reduce ESL lessons from daily sessions to a twice-weekly schedule on the basis of the student's strong English skills.

Tsuneo, also in fifth grade has attended schools in both Japan and America. This *kaigaishijo* has not made the academic progress typical of other Japanese students despite ESL services. Tsuneo's teachers have consistently related that the boy seems disinterested in school, never turns in his homework, and has never had a friend in their classrooms. He is the least acculturated of the four children.

A distinguishing characteristic the four *kaigaishijo* share is a sense of reserve, a trait regarded as a sign of maturity in Japan (Benjamin, 1997; Hendry, 1996). American students learn to express their feelings and opinions among themselves and to their teachers. Japanese students are instructed to neither look their teachers in the face nor question them during the course of a lesson but to wait until instruction is completed to ask for clarification (Benjamin, 1997; Hendry, 1996). The *sensai*, or Japanese teacher, is a respected individual worthy of a polite level of speech. Beliefs and attitudes held by children learning a second language may influence their willingness to interact with members of the host culture. In turn, certain attitudes of members of the host culture critically affect what they share with second-language learners. Fillmore (1991) believes fervently that mixed messages second-language learners receive from members of the host culture sometimes result in inappropriate adjustments for second-language-learning children.

ESL Services

One hour of individual ESL tutoring daily is the only service over and above regular classroom instruction that is provided to second-language learners. In the ESL program designed for this school system, each student above the age of seven who does not speak English as her/his first language receives ESL assistance. The ESL teacher needs neither training nor certification to qualify for the position. According to the school system's ESL supervisor, any number of persons, including parents and community members, may serve as ESL teachers. ESL teachers are hourly employees who receive no additional benefits such as sick leave or hospitalization insurance. ESL teachers may be hired for a maximum of five hours daily. Recruited by word of mouth, ESL teachers are hired as needed by school principals. The ESL supervisor, who also supervises foreign language and art teachers, provides direction for ESL teachers upon the request of a school administrator.

The ESL program is not based on the inclusion model but is similar to the reading recovery "pull-out model," according to the ESL supervisor who indicates that the program is highly successful in this school system. Valid measurements of success, however, are unavailable because ESL students are exempt from standardized achievement testing. They are not required to take state or local achievement, ability, or predictor tests because their English skills are deemed inadequate for reading and comprehension of the material. Furthermore, the school system owns only one type of nonverbal ability assessment appropriate for use with ESL students. It must be administered in a one-on-one situation by a trained psychometrician. The persons hired

as ESL teachers are not trained in the administration of nonverbal abstract-figural tests deemed appropriate for second-language students. School psychologists with the required psychometric training are too busy testing students in need of special education to test ESL students. The needs of ESL students do not appear to be a priority in this school system. The assumption of the success of the ESL program rests only on hearsay and the gratitude of parents who speak limited English themselves.

Acculturation Process

Each of these four children demonstrates a different degree of acculturation in her/his behavior at school. An involuntary minority, *kaigaishijo* are enrolled in this school not on their own accord but as a result of their fathers' international business assignments. The only Japanese students in a predominantly white school, *kaigaishijo* adapt to their new surroundings according to some degree of adjustment or withdrawal (Berry et al., 1988). Assimilation into the second culture is not the issue here; rather, since these students will return to their own country with their families, they are not trying to assimilate and certainly are not encouraged by their families to assimilate. Depending upon age and length of residency, students' attitudes and behaviors appear to reflect diverse positions on a continuum of acculturation. I suggest, then, that at least with these four students, the spectrum of positions ranges from acculturation on one end of the continuum to deliberate withdrawal from the host culture on the other. In between the two extremes, students experience either quasi-integration or degrees of marginality.

Despite the fact that they are all Japanese, the students are, as one might expect, unique individuals with preconceived notions about the world. Expectations of parents

for their children also vary from household to household. Even those students whose families embrace the host culture as desirable experience periods of anxiety as evidenced in a lack of self-confidence or loss of spontaneity (Oberg, 1960; Nash, 1967). Three of the four students of this study appeared to blend the best of both cultures and experience integration. After a period of marginalization and withdrawal, the fourth student began to acculturate. Patterns and states of acculturation emerged as I analyzed and interpreted the children's experiences.

Ken's Story

Eight-year-old Ken, youngest of the four *kaigaishijo*, is a student in third grade who converses fluently in English. He is the one who is most fully acculturated and, yet, his story is the least complex. With the exception of attending a Japanese public school for three weeks while his family returned to Tokyo in 1996, Ken's schooling has occurred only in an American primary and this intermediate school setting.

In 1991 Ken and his parents arrived in the United States. Before his transfer to the local Mitsubishi plant, Ken's father attended graduate school in Pennsylvania to study chemical engineering. The company moved the family to this area in 1994. Due to the current economic crisis in Japan, the company is downsizing and has notified Ken's family of their imminent return in March, 1998. Since the notification, Ken's 36-year-old father has considered changing companies when he returns to Japan. Uncertain about his opportunities for advancement while his company is reorganizing, Ken's father has decided he needs to market his skills elsewhere. A career move to another company does not seem unusual by Western standards, but the expectation of lifetime employment in

Japan has been the norm rather than the exception until recently. While decisions are being made, Ken's family has decided to move in with his grandparents who reside in the Tokyo suburbs.

The mother's role in acculturation. A product of Japanese schooling and a certified teacher, Ken's mother values education as the key to a successful and fulfilling life. She volunteers each Saturday as the test administrator for the Japanese school that serves approximately 50 *kaigaishijo*, including Ken. When language and math tests must be administered, she distributes materials to students and proctors the examination period. Eventually, when Ken and his preschool brother are older, Ken's mother plans to resume her professional teaching career in Japan.

Fluent in English but hesitant to volunteer information, Ken's mother seems unaccustomed to being asked her opinion and somewhat uncertain about what I wanted to know. Although she does not consider herself to be a *kyoiku mama*, an education mama, Ken's mother shoulders the educational responsibilities for her sons. She attends school conferences, signs report cards, and assists Ken with his homework. She places her younger son in a day care facility three times a week because she thinks it is important for him to interact socially with children his age. During that time, she runs errands, shops, and attends school functions like Ken's third-grade winter holiday party. Ken's mother expects to become even more involved in the education of both of her sons upon the family's return to Japan.

Japanese mothers place their children's education above any other activity in which the family engages. They provide study space even in the most crowded

apartments. Mothers meet all of the physical demands of school by helping with homework, supplying clean clothing, planning for field trips, and purchasing required materials, such as art supplies, for their children. Initially, these responsibilities do not seem altogether different from those assumed by American mothers. The difference, however, is in the relationship between the Japanese mother and her children. Instead of teaching independence as Western mothers do, Japanese mothers foster a lifetime relationship of dependency between themselves and their children by making their children's needs the primary focus of their lives (Benjamin, 1997; Bernstein, 1996; Christopher, 1983; Iwao, 1993; White, 1988). Mothers absorb the frustrations children frequently experience in meeting school demands and serve as their personal coaches and tutors. Mothers feel personally responsible for constantly encouraging, persuading, and cajoling their children to do their best work (Iwao, 1993). American children would think their mothers were nagging them in such a relationship. If children fail, Japanese mothers also experience failure that brings shame upon their families. One anthropologist describes this dynamic between the mother, who will be embarrassed by her child's poor school performance, and the child, who is unwilling to hurt the mother, as emotional blackmail (Benjamin, 1997). The relationship, however, is neither heavy-handed nor threatening.

One day Ken spontaneously shared with me that he thinks having children is very hard and a waste of money and that he probably would never be a father. When I asked if he had come to that conclusion himself, Ken told me he had heard his mother say that childrearing is difficult. He also informed me that he had seen that theme in Japanese

videos his family had recently rented from *Ichiban*, meaning “first” or “best,” a local store specializing in authentic Japanese products and materials. Ken’s understanding of the association Japanese make between childrearing and hardship attests to maturity beyond his years. Although Japanese love their children, they do, indeed, associate childrearing with hardship instead of pleasure. Japanese mothers take the responsibility of childrearing seriously, unlike many American mothers who expect children to be responsible for themselves at an early age. “In fact, there is a tendency among both mothers and fathers to demand from their children the kind of performance that will compensate them for the difficulties they feel they have undergone” (Iwao, 1993, p. 133). Japanese mothers feel answerable for their children’s behavior. They do not look for scapegoats. Japanese children, in turn, feel obligated to their mothers for their devotion and sacrifice. This dependency syndrome cements the bond between mother and child which, as some Japanese mothers admit, is stronger between mothers and children than between husbands and wives (Christopher, 1983; Iwao, 1993).

As the wage-earning male, the Japanese father serves as the head of the household. Japanese mothers, however, traditionally manage family finances to adequately care for family needs and requirements. The understanding within the family is that the mother-child relationship supersedes the husband-wife relationship:

If the American family can be described by the letter T, with the father and mother at both ends of the bar at the top and the children along the vertical line joining the bar in the middle, the Japanese family is more like the letter L, with the father at the top of the vertical line, the mother at the bottom corner, and the

children along the horizontal line that starts from the mother's corner. The mother is the hinge between father and child, and the mother-child line contributes more to the stability of the family than the husband-wife line. (Iwao, 1993, p. 135)

Ken's father has made only one appearance at the intermediate school because of the long hours he works. As the wage earner, he provides monetarily for his family's physical needs. To his credit from the American point of view, Ken's father has taken advantage of opportunities to be with his family on weekends and holidays. During Thanksgiving holidays, for example, he drove his family to the Biltmore in North Carolina. Ken returned to school with glowing reports of a castle with a Christmas tree in every room. This particular Japanese family has elected to learn about American history through their family travels, limited mainly to the eastern region of the country. Since I have never met the father, I can only assume that he supports his wife's strong stance on education.

Ken's mother thinks that the experience of living in the United States has been especially positive in terms of material goods and practicing the language. Her family is able to enjoy the luxury of a large house with a big yard in a quiet neighborhood that would be unaffordable in Japan even in the unlikely event that the family could find land on which to build. The family enjoys ownership of two automobiles that they will neither need nor be able to afford in Tokyo. Ken's mother is proud of her son's accomplishments in both the primary and intermediate schools. She thinks that no amount of schooling in Japan could equal the opportunity of living in America and speaking English

on a daily basis. Her understanding of her maternal role compels her to carefully guide her children, because she feels that she is ultimately answerable for their achievements and success. Her relationship to her children is extremely important:

The relationship of dependency and obligation fostered in the child by the mother extends to family, school, company and country, and is the essence of Japanese society. The child is taught that he must do well or people will laugh at him.
(Simons, 1987, p. 48)

If the Japanese mother refuses to accept her responsibility to her children, their improper behavior could bring shame upon the family (Simons, 1987; Iwao, 1993). Good or proper behavior that comes from accepting one's responsibilities and conforming to the rules supposedly has its own rewards. It appears to be particularly important for the mother to conform to the expectation of good parenting. How she interprets what she does is her responsibility. Conformity is the expectation (Hendry, 1996; Seward, 1995).

Language acquisition. Although Ken's parents speak Japanese to each other and to their sons at home, they notice that the boys converse as easily in English as in Japanese. Ken's mother says her sons rarely confuse the two languages. In fact, if Ken is conversing in Japanese but is unable to think of a Japanese equivalent to explain a concept or a particular activity, he substitutes an English word.

Ken may initially miss some of his American friends but his mother is not worried about his adjustment to Japanese school life. He will be admired by his teachers and classmates, regardless of the elementary school he attends, because of his ability to speak

English without a Japanese accent. “The students like to hear the ones returning from overseas speak English. He may be teased a bit about his American ways, but he is young and smart and a good student with good study habits,” Ken’s mother explained.

Teachers’ assessments of Ken’s skills indicated that his learner attributes and general cognitive ability favorably impact his facility with language and vice versa. Clearly, language acquisition is not a simple process but is probably determined by the interaction of numerous variables. Most language processing models adhere to the principle of an innate language acquisition device (LAD) operative in all children (Bley-Vroman, 1989; Fillmore, 1991; Singleton & Lengyel, 1995). In addition to the LAD, deductive and inductive reasoning, dependent on cognitive faculties instead of the language faculty, necessarily play a part in acquiring language. Ken’s experiences bear out a model of language learning dependent upon a favorable social context (Fillmore, 1991). Certain aspects of Ken’s personality, such as his cooperative spirit and his need and willingness to communicate, impact not only his communication skills but also the entire acculturation process.

Ken has learned to speak, read, and write English so well that his father asked during a November parent conference why ESL services continue to be necessary. The teacher shared with Ken’s parents that their son, always motivated and animated when he is learning, is undoubtedly her best math student. After considerable discussion with the parents, the teacher, unable to satisfy the father’s query, invited the ESL teacher to join the conference. The ESL teacher explained to Ken’s parents that she does many things to assist their son with his assignments in science and social studies as well as in English.

She encouraged them to allow their son to have the benefit of one-on-one tutoring, at least through third grade, to ensure his continued academic success. Both parents seemed satisfied when teachers reassured them that Ken's participation in the ESL program in no way compromises his academic standing nor stigmatizes him. (ti-2.12.98)

Ken's parents did not reveal to the teachers whether they consider ESL services to be a stigma. The intermediate school has always placed photographs of the ESL students on the hall bulletin board or on the ESL classroom door for identification purposes. The photos have served effectively to inform the entire school population that ESL students may, from time to time, need the assistance of English-speaking students. In fact, ESL students have always enjoyed a certain eminence within this school setting.

Clothing. Consumerism, at least in the form of purchased clothing, is important to Ken and his mother. Ken likes stylish clothes. His up-to-date school clothing reflects his mother's understanding of popular trends. Ken's mother enjoys shopping for herself and her family. American clothing is relatively inexpensive when compared to similar items available in Japan. When American boys wear baggy denim shorts cut off just below the knees, Ken dresses the same way. Comfortable denim jeans and sweatshirts are his favorites for cool weather. Rarely does he wear the same pair of athletic shoes two days consecutively; rather, he sports a black pair followed by a white pair and then a black-and-white pair of hightops. Except for the telltale epicanthic fold characteristic of Asian eyes, Ken's appearance is thoroughly American. Taking on the culture by wearing American clothing, particularly popular and trend-setting styles, attests to how fully acculturated Ken is.

Artistic endeavors. Ken's drawings are on a par with his American peers and his speech includes American colloquialisms typical of children his age:

Toward the end of the class period, the ESL teacher began to tidy up the round table where she and Ken were sitting. She asked him to use the remaining minutes of class to draw pictures to accompany his vocabulary words. Without hesitation, Ken dashed off a drawing of a girl holding a large bag by the handles. I asked him what the wavy lines extending upward from the bag represented. Ken explained that the lines indicated that a gross smell was emanating from the bag, "gross" being one of his vocabulary words. While he continued to draw, the ESL teacher showed me some pictures that another *kaigaishijo*, the most recent arrival to the intermediate school, had drawn. I could easily distinguish the influence of Japanese *manga* copied from Japanese comics in the girl's renderings. I pointed out this difference to the ESL teacher. She said that she had never seen a Japanese comic book or cartoon. Ken's illustrations, in contrast, resembled what an average American student in third grade might draw. (co-9.22.97)

Ken, further along on the acculturation continuum than the girl, had drawn the female figure with a round head, a triangular dress, and "spaghetti" arms and legs on a level consistent with what elementary American children typically draw. The Japanese girl's drawings of chubby-faced imps, tiny and plump, with large eyes and button noses could easily have been plucked from images sustained through her exposure to Japanese cartoon figures prevalent in comic books, children's literature, children's toys, Japanese videotapes, or any other popular culture mass media. The ESL teacher's ignorance of the

actual reasons for the distinct differences between the children's drawings illustrated her unfamiliarity with certain aspects of Japanese culture. It also illustrated her unfamiliarity with how children's drawings reflect cognitive development. Children's drawings, in fact, serve not only to illuminate much of what they understand about the culture in which they find themselves but also frequently provide a graphic vocabulary that offers psychologists and other professionals insights into their emotional states and personalities (Light & Barnes, 1995).

Maturation. Friendly and pleasant, Ken participates in all class activities. His third-grade class of 20 students includes four African-Americans, two Hispanic students, and Ken. The class is more cross-culturally diverse than most other classrooms in this predominantly white school. Regardless of the cooperative group to which he is assigned, Ken apparently works well with all of his classmates.

Recognizing Ken's cooperative spirit, his teacher rearranged her classroom in November and assigned to his group a female student who was experiencing learning difficulties. The girl had no friends. Ken, unlike other students, did not overtly shun her, a testimony to his patience, maturity, and willingness to cooperate. For instance,

a few days before Thanksgiving holidays, Ken's cooperative group was seated in the alcove outside their classroom. I listened as students took turns reading a story about the first Thanksgiving. When the girl became frustrated and slammed her book on the floor, Ken quietly returned it to her and began reading in her place. I waited until the group had completed the story before I asked the girl to tell me about the main character. She responded, "She got some kind of things

that carry visitors or something.” I looked at Ken and asked the same question.

“She does lots of chores. She plants the garden and umm, umm cooks the

dinner,” he responded. “Plants the garden and cooks the dinner and I forgot,”

interjected the girl. “Can anyone remember any other chores Sarah performed?”

I asked the group. Ken waited respectfully and glanced around at the faces of the

other group members. When no one volunteered, he said that the main character

folded her sheets and put them into a corner each morning. (co-11.24.97)

For one so young, Ken demonstrated remarkable restraint and patience in dealing with the troublesome girl in his group. Intuitively, Ken understood that the best thing to do in the situation was not to make an issue over the girl’s slamming her book on the floor. When the girl was unable to handle the reading material, Ken wisely began to read in her place. An American student, or any student less mature than Ken, might have hightailed it to the teacher to tattle on the girl. He saved the girl from embarrassment, demonstrated a sense of reserve, and manifested a sensitivity to the needs of a fellow human being that some adults never acquire. “Gaining a sense of reserve is seen as a sign of maturity in Japan, so while teachers may enjoy the enthusiasm of younger students, they expect and do not disapprove of more restrained response from the older ones” (Benjamin, 1997, p. 121). The maturational level of the child impacts the acculturation process.

Educational expectations. Calendar math activities were conducted in Ken’s classroom the day before Thanksgiving holidays. Ken’s reputation as the best math student in his class was verified when he was the first to raise his hand in response to

every question the teacher asked. He was exuberant throughout the class with eyes alert, a broad smile on his face, and dimples pronounced. The only child who was able to perform all the computations mentally and to answer correctly each time, Ken was engrossed in the activity. Leaning slightly forward with his arms resting on his desk, Ken's body language confirmed that he immensely enjoyed the math challenge.

The math activity was clearly an example of the overall emphasis in this culture on the philosophy of making learning fun for children. American teachers who observe students smiling as they are learning have traditionally assumed that they have communicated the curriculum in a painless fashion. Ken, confident in his understanding of both the material and his teacher's expectations, implicitly understood that calendar math was an acceptable time to demonstrate his expertise with numbers.

My observations at Japanese Saturday school, however, led me to believe that students consider learning to be serious business and that smiles sometimes serve only to cover embarrassment in certain awkward situations. The Japanese Saturday school math teacher specified certain problems for students to solve and gave them adequate time to derive correct answers. Third graders in Japanese Saturday school were performing math computations equivalent to those in the American fifth-grade text. When students offered incorrect answers, they smiled but immediately apologized to the teacher. It seemed to me that the students personally accepted the blame for misunderstood solutions. The teacher never indicated that he may have inadequately explained a particular concept. Ken's understanding of the different philosophy in an American school setting through his participation in calendar math, an activity intended to make learning fun,

demonstrated once again how far he has advanced on the continuum toward full acculturation. The child's understanding of educational expectations represents another facet of the acculturation process.

Math has been Ken's forte all along, but both his classroom and ESL teachers think he is enthusiastic about learning in general. They describe him as alert, affable, and well-behaved. "Today, when I asked the children to mentally add 528 and 33, Ken's hand was immediately raised. As always, his answer was correct: 561." The classroom teacher continued to explain to me that Ken is a good reader as well as a good math student. By the middle of October, ahead of most students in his class, Ken had already met his first reading goal of 100 pages, a goal specified in a reading incentive campaign for the entire school. Reaching that goal earned Ken a certificate for free food at a local pizza establishment. The ESL teacher shared that Ken seems curious about the structure of English as it differs from Japanese. He likes homophones and words with multiple meanings. Sounds of different words have continued to intrigue him as evidenced by Ken's attempts to perfectly emulate the teacher's pronunciation of new or difficult vocabulary words. Ken also shared with both teachers early in the school year that he likes words and hopes to become a famous author as an adult.

Ken is meticulous and attends to detail, following directions precisely in all of his classes. The ESL teacher notes that Ken always does exactly what she tells him and nothing more. Accompanying him from his regular classroom to the ESL room one morning, she remembers how Ken would not respond to any of her questions or comments. When she asked him why, he waited until they reached the door to the

classroom to respond. His response was that his teacher said students are not allowed to talk in the halls. At the door to the ESL room, upon their discovery that Ken had forgotten to bring an important assignment, the ESL teacher told him to retrieve it quickly. Taking the short cut, Ken literally raced across the open courtyard and darted back to the ESL room, arriving breathlessly at the door, assignment in hand.

Ken's behavior demonstrates that he listens and tries to do exactly what he thinks is expected. Obviously, he wants to please his teachers and believes that implicitly following directions is one way to win their favor. The desire to please by playing each game strictly by the rules is also characteristic of Ken's behavior in resource classes:

The physical education teacher, directing the 10 boys in Ken's class to walk to the stage and select scooters for their game, noticed that Ken was the only student who followed instructions. Boys and girls alike grabbed their scooters and raced off across the gym floor, bumping and colliding into one another. Not as aggressive as many of his classmates, Ken preferred to scoot around the perimeter of the gymnasium floor away from the heavy traffic. When he accidentally fell off his scooter, Ken, knowing he was disqualified, promptly placed his equipment in the designated area and walked to the sidelines. (co-9.23.97)

Ken does not appear to be particularly athletic although he follows all the directions in his twice weekly physical education classes at the intermediate school. He leaves once a week after school to take swimming lessons at a local recreational facility. He says he likes to play basketball. I have never seen him play at school. He thinks he is not very good at spinning a ball on his finger, which he tells me is part of being a good

basketball player. Perhaps he watches the pros on television and thinks tricks are indicative of basketball skills.

A receptive attitude. When his mother babysits, Ken and his brother enjoy playing with the children temporarily in their mother's care. Ken describes one occasion:

It was a fun weekend. When it was Friday I babysitted Kim and Nat. My friends came too. One of my friends went home because she pushed one of my friends down the slide and he was crying. He thought his fingers were broken but it was a joke. I knew it was a joke because my friend said to bring my mom but I was thinking because it falled off of his he still wouldn't brake his body so I went in there without my mom and he was angry as like usual but without standing up. Would he ask as usual without standing up? No. But I said to my mom to come upstairs. My friend tricked everybody except me. It was snadk [snack] time so we ate and ate and then my friend said "Let's play bike." We did. I said "Let's play Alyan [alien]." So we did and I was the monster. Brandon went home and Kim and Nat went home but Brandon came back and played for a little while and he asked if he could spend a night at my house. My mom said yes and his mom said yes and my friend asked if I could go to a football game and we did. There was a parade after the football game. Then my friend spend a night. It was a fun day. I went to Japanese school. After I ate dinner and I went to Makoto's house because my mom went somewhere. We played a lot of things. The very next day I went to fun forest with my friend. It was fun. I had a very great weekend. (kjs-10.13.97)

First of all, Ken's creative writing demonstrates his ability to easily remember and reconstruct events. Secondly, his capacity to anticipate and analyze the behaviors of his peers attests to a maturity level beyond his years. Thirdly, his mother's willingness to babysit for American neighbors and to allow Ken to participate in American forms of entertainment and have an American boy spend the night in their home are indicative of her receptive attitude toward Western culture. If parents, like Ken's mother, view the host culture as friendly and the experiences gained as positive, they become their children's role models. Through social interaction with English-speaking Americans, the acculturation process is accelerated.

Personality. Ken is neither impulsive nor reckless but tends to be thoughtful and cautious. He takes neither overt risks nor deliberately breaks rules. He appears to be focused and determined to do his best in any environment. His journal entries testify to the same careful attention to detail he demonstrates in physical responses. One interesting entry describes how he counts the bus stops on the way to school and anticipates events of the day. Another illustrates in minute detail a pencil box he constructed:

Sunday I made a pencil holder. It's made out of a Japanese gum container and a piece of paper and tape and box. Four or five pencils can fit in it. I use it at home. First I [w]rap the top with tape and [w]rap the body with a piece of paper. Then I broke the bottom and I cut the top where it opens and where it hold[s] it. I painted it and when it dried I taped the part where it opens and where it broke. I taped the part where it hold[s] the part that opens the top. It'll fall so I put a part

of a box on it. Then I finished. There still was a piece of the box left so I think I will make a plane. (kjs-9.30.97)

Ken's deliberate serial thinking is atypical of American third graders (Piaget, 1970). It requires more persistence and focus than most students are mature enough or willing to devote to such an endeavor. For Ken, it is part of the reason he has earned a reputation as a the model student, the example teachers wish all students would emulate.

Ken fits the stereotype of the super-achieving Asian student, the model for Americans. His mother, an educator herself, maintains a focus on her family and a clear sense of her responsibility to ensure appropriate educations for her sons. Her outlook is positive and she maintains high expectations for Ken. Industrious, respectful, cooperative, attentive, and friendly, Ken possesses all the attributes that endear students to teachers. He understands what his mother expects and gains praise from his teachers by consistently demonstrating good study habits and exemplary behavior. If Ken were remaining in the United States, his teachers agree that they would not recommend ESL services after third grade due to the student's high-functioning status. His current report card grades are indicative of excellence in that he received an A in English, an A in math, and satisfactory, represented by an "S," in science and social studies. The boy's personality reflects his mother's self-confident, friendly attitude. Ken's confidence and expressive personality apparently are related to his successful acculturation.

Length of residency. The fact that six of Ken's eight years have been spent in the United States makes his behavior, language, drawing, certain personality aspects, and clothing more American than Japanese. Young children in the early phases of

socialization who have not been exposed to their native culture for an extended length of time, will take on aspects of the host culture as readily as they would have assumed characteristics of their native culture. The young child cannot recognize cultural differences (Minoura, 1979). Older and more experienced children would, however, be expected to differentiate between cultures if they had already been exposed to their native culture and had acquired some facility with symbols such as art and language. Ken has been educated and socialized in American public schools, but he also attends Japanese Saturday school and speaks both Japanese and English at home. Not only have teachers described Ken's behavior as respectful and polite but they also note that he demonstrates a sense of reserve, a typically Japanese characteristic. Ken's early arrival and extended residency have spared him many of the stressful phases of acculturation experienced by *kaigaishijo* who have arrived when they were older and have remained briefly in the host country. While it appears that a relationship exists between length of residency and acculturation, the student's stories that follow will illuminate that subject.

Family value of education. Subtly, Ken's extended family reinforces the same values inculcated by his mother as illustrated in the following journal entry written two weeks after his grandparents had visited during the fall:

My grandfather left and I miss him. He eats a lot but he's not fat. Once my grandmother said "You eat a lot." Before he came I thought what was he going to give me? I hoped it was a small car race track to see how fast my race car was. But it was 5 new books. [Hideo] got a chapter book with two chapters. It was Ultraman Tigga book. We liked it. When my grandfather left I went to school. I

hoped I could watch the airplanes. A present I want to have is a Japanese airplane that separates into 3 airplanes and another one that spreads into two. The best present I ever got was Super Nintendo. My favorite relative is my grandfather because he brings presents when he comes to America and on Christmas and birthdays. (ksj-11.6.97)

Unwittingly, Ken revealed that his grandfather, like his mother, values education as evidenced by the fact that he brought books from Japan for his two grandsons. Although Ken enjoyed the books, he secretly wished for toys as most boys do. When it was time for his grandparents to leave, Ken went to school. His family reinforced the value they place on education by sending their son to school instead of allowing him to go to the airport.

Although Ken knows that he is Japanese, what that means to him is a concept he is only beginning to conceptualize as this journal entry illustrates:

I'm a Japanese boy in America. I go to school on the weekdays like the other kids, but I also go to Japanese school every Saturday. My mom is a teacher there for fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. We drive together each Saturday. In Japanese school, I do a lot of things. In the morning I do math. Now I'm doing the times tables. I like to do math better than tests or Japanese spelling. But math is pretty harder than the American math. After math, I get 10 minutes of recess. After recess I do Japanese spelling. I think I like Japanese letters better than American letters, but they're getting harder. There are three ways to write Japanese: *Hiragana* and *Kanji* are used most, and *Katakana* is used for words that are not in

Japan. After 20 minutes of recess and test time, I go home and eat somewhere that is near. Now I have a week to finish all my homework. (ksj-2.12.98)

Ken comprehends that being Japanese distinguishes him from his American peers. Having never visited Japanese Saturday school, his American teacher has no conception of what Ken's additional studies entail and was impressed by his description. Neither does she have an understanding of the Japanese system of education that Ken will encounter. When Ken returns to Japan, in contrast to his experiences in America, he will walk to school and carry the required black backpack for boys filled with education materials. Japanese girls carry red backpacks. Except for Sunday, Ken will meet his neighborhood group on a daily basis for the short trek to the neighborhood elementary school where students perfunctorily remove their outdoor shoes upon arrival. Ken will place his shoes in a rack beside his locker in exchange for soft school slippers. He will use the Japanese restroom where students squat over slipper-shaped urinals in the floor. Unlike cafeteria-style food served in American schools, lunches in Japanese schools are prepared by a dietician but served by students in their classrooms. Not only will Ken have to take his turn serving lunch, but also he will be responsible for helping clean the school in lieu of hired custodial services. These tasks are thought to promote a shared sense of responsibility and harmony among students. They provide the basis of interdependence in a society constructed around the division of labor. As a former student and teacher, Ken's mother shared with me that she has explained these changes to her son and feels confident of her ability to guide him through the Japanese educational system.

Ken understands that education is important to his family because his mother is a teacher. Not only does Ken function on an academic level commensurate with his American peers, but he also exceeds expectations in math and creative writing. He makes only minute mechanical and grammatical errors consistent with expectations for students in third grade. On the basis of his performance to date, it is quite likely that he could qualify for placement in gifted and talented education. There will be no opportunity, however, to administer achievement and ability assessments necessary for gifted identification prior to Ken's departure in March, 1998. When I probed Ken's teacher for reasons to which she attributes his success, her instantaneous response was that his home environment must have a tremendous impact on acculturation. She thought that the fact that Ken's mother is a teacher and understands the relationship between education and socialization has had a positive impact on Ken's educational success. When I asked her to compare the acculturation process for Ken and her Japanese student from the past year, she responded as follows:

Well, she has a lot to learn, but she has not lived here as long. I would say that Ken has acculturated, but my student from last year is only at the beginning of the process. She does not understand English as well as he does, either, but he was speaking Japanese and English, too, I think, before he started kindergarten. (ti-2.10.98)

When Ken discusses differences between Japan and America, he recognizes physical differences, such as having to live in small apartments under crowded conditions in Tokyo, wearing uniforms to school in Japan, exchanging one's shoes for slippers at

entrances to Japanese dwellings, and eating Japanese food. He has not actually experienced all of these differences, but he is learning to recognize cultural differences he was maturationally incapable of comprehending at age two. After the luxury of a large American house, a small apartment will require adjustment for Ken and his family. Without a yard for running and playing, he and other Japanese students will depend for exercise on physical education classes and organized sports clubs affiliated with their schools. Uniforms, according to Ken's mother, are not required until junior high school in Japan. Ken will, therefore, be able to wear the clothing he likes and has acquired in America. Ken's mother requires both family members and visitors to remove their shoes and wear slippers indoors. Consequently, Ken considers that Japanese custom to be quite ordinary. Ken enjoys Japanese food and explained that his mother prepares mostly Japanese dishes at home, including noodles, *miso* soup, rice, and fish, although she occasionally prepares the American sandwiches that he enjoys. Ken understands that his sojourner status in America is tied to his father's job. Returning to Tokyo where international schools flourish to meet the needs of *kikokushijo*, Ken will be one of many students who has lived abroad and speaks English. Listening to his mother and teachers and meeting their expectations has contributed to Ken's acculturative success, congruency with the American sociocultural environment.

Ken is obviously one of the *kaigaishijo* who has adjusted well to American life and can be described as fully acculturated. He is fluent in oral and written English, the language of the host country. Ken appears to be a mature, well-adjusted student who meets and exceeds educational expectations. His family believes in the value of

education. Ken represents the Japanese student who successfully integrates aspects of the host culture into his life and personality, resulting in a comfortable congruency between the cultures of Japan and America.

Maki's Story

Maki a fifth grader who celebrated her eleventh birthday in February, 1998, arrived in America when she was six years old. On the basis of her age, this *kaigaishijo* was placed in first grade at the American primary school that feeds into the intermediate school where this study takes place. With the exception of two weeks attendance in public school in Tokyo, Maki has not attended school in Japan. She spoke no English when she arrived. Maki is now in fifth grade at the intermediate school.

On the continuum from least acculturated to most fully acculturated into the American lifestyle, Maki follows closely behind Ken, the most fully acculturated of the four *kaigaishijo*. Although her teachers say Maki is “Americanized,” she integrates more aspects of Japanese life into her American way of living than does Ken. Her appreciation and understanding of certain aspects of Japanese culture may be attributed to her mother’s influence.

For six years Maki’s father attended Keio University, a private institution of higher learning in Japan. Keio is not quite on a par with Tokyo University, Japan’s most prestigious public institution where admission is based solely on the entrance exam. However, it is considered to be one of Japan’s best private universities (Christopher, 1983; Goodman, 1990). He received undergraduate and graduate degrees in chemical engineering from Keio. During his university days, he played soccer. He joined a soccer

club where he was introduced to the team manager who became his wife and the mother of his two children.

Maki's mother shared that her 33-year-old husband's favorite weekend pastimes include teaching the children to play soccer and baseball or taking them to a park to enjoy nature. Maki's journal entries corroborate her mother's statement:

On Sunday I went canoeing with my family. This was my second time. When we were canoeing we saw a turtle sticking its head out. When my brother paddled, the water always splashes on me and my mom. It was cold and I got wet a lot. There were lots of bugs on the water. It looked like a spider. We got under the bridge. When I went a little closer to the edge, the boat almost fell. I was scared. After canoeing we went to the playground. There was a mountain of sand. It was fun. I wish I could play and go canoeing again. (msj-9.9.97)

Another of Maki's journal entries describes the fun she had when her dad was trying to teach her to play baseball, a favorite pastime and spectator sport in Japan:

In summer my brother and my father and I played baseball. We took turn[s] batting and [playing] pitcher and catcher. But my dad threw all the time. My dad said, "Hey mom! Why don't you come and play!" But my mom said, "No. It's ok." So we played without mom. It was difficult to play because every [time] my brother or I got on base we have to start over. But when my brother quit, we played with two. But soon we quit too. It was fun to play baseball. I wish we could play with my mom next time. (msj-10.9.98)

Although he has never made appearances at the elementary school, Maki's father

is involved with his children on weekends. On several occasions when I have seen him with his family at local restaurants, he is always solicitous of them. Cordial and smiling, he allows his wife to assume the responsibility for the informal banter that occurs during the exchange of greetings. Maki's mother describes her husband as an athletic person who plays outdoor games. Due to stringent demands of her husband's job, Maki's mother explains that the family has little time to travel in the United States. Their travels include several trips to Washington, DC, and two Florida vacations.

Maki's mother graduated from a three-year nursing program in Japan and worked at Keio University Hospital for one year. Through her brother, she became the manager of the soccer team where she met the man she married. Since her arrival in the United States, she has volunteered her services on a regular basis at the local hospital. She has no idea if she will return to nursing in Japan when her children are older.

The mother's role in acculturation. Maki's mother accepts her responsibility, in characteristic Japanese fashion, as the parent responsible for her children's education. Always smiling and friendly, she makes frequent appearances at the intermediate school. She arrives punctually an hour after school on club days to transport her daughter home after *origami* or computer club. Clad in jeans, a flannel shirt, and athletic shoes, Maki's mother dresses as casually as American mothers. She converses as easily in English with her child's teacher as she does in Japanese with the intern teacher. She appears to be self-assured and confident. She always has her hand out to shake a teacher's hand. Unlike Japanese who are less acculturated, she looks Americans straight in the face when she speaks. Maki's mother understands cultural expectations in the United States and

demonstrates through her typical American attire and behavior that she is completely acculturated.

Maki's mother believes that the local Japanese Saturday school both children attend is too much like American public school. She thinks the school encourages too much individualism and a lack of respect for the *sensai*, or teacher. If Maki's mother had her way, the school would more closely emulate Japanese public schools noted for rigorous standards and discipline as well as respect for teachers. According to Maki's mother, the proper way for a Japanese student to behave, as she was taught to do as a student, is to conform to expectations by sitting quietly, by listening to the teacher, and by observing the appropriate attitude of respect due the *sensai*. Children in Japanese schools acquire the proper behavior patterns appropriate for Japanese life. What this mother observes in the Japanese Saturday school her children attend in the United States is a room full of noisy students who speak out of turn and wave their hands in the air for the teacher's attention. Instead of respecting the *sensai* as an authority figure, students tend to treat the teacher as a friend. The emphasis on learning the Japanese language and accelerated mathematics in a school operated by the parents, according to Maki's mother's assessment, is not meeting the expectations of a number of Japanese families. Although there appears to be discontent with the Japanese Saturday school, the parents take no initiative to correct the problems. Like Maki's mother, other Japanese parents feel that what is offered the 50 *kaigaishijo* within a 100-mile radius is better than nothing at all but not as effective as Japanese schools in metropolitan areas of America where large salaries attract certified and experienced Japanese teachers:

As the drive toward success in Japan becomes more intense, the differentness implied by a non-Japanese education becomes more threatening, leading some overseas families to demand better Japanese facilities for their children. It is still hard to be both a Japanese parent and an “international person.” (White, 1988, p. 97)

Maki’s mother thinks that the knowledge and study habits her daughter has already acquired in the United States will translate to her studies in Japan. Although she sometimes must encourage her daughter to begin her homework, she considers that to be part of a mother’s responsibilities. Maki, according to her mother, is generally a diligent student. The girl’s favorite subject is math, but she also writes poetry and enjoys meticulous crafts, especially *origami*, in her spare time. Clubs are not extracurricular but are part of the regular curriculum in the longer school day in Japan where Maki will probably become more involved in crafts. Maki’s mother plans to encourage the diligence she has already seen in her daughter and feels that she can successfully guide both children through the Japanese educational system. The mother’s role in properly guiding her children to become contributing members of society impacts the degree to which they acculturate (Benedict, 1946; Caudill & Weinstein, 1969; Goldstein & Tamura, 1976; Hendry, 1996; Iwao, 1993; White, 1987).

Motherhood is generally recognized as a high status position among Japanese. “A mother in Japan is judged socially on the success of her children” (Goodman, 1993, p. 83). A good mother is expected to place her children’s needs above her own. “Even today, what it means to be a good mother in Japan is measured by how much a mother

does for the sake of the child” (Iwao, 1993, p. 138). It is the mother who is faced with the responsibility to ensure that her children have not suffered as *kaigaishijo* in their overseas experience (White, 1980).

Language acquisition. Maki demonstrates fluency in English, her second language, and has done so since third grade. Her proficiency with English appears to be consistent with research supporting children’s mastery of the host language within a 27-month period (Cummins, 1991). However, there are no state or local standardized test results in her permanent records to verify grade-level proficiency in English or any other academic subjects. The intermediate school continues to provide ESL services twice weekly for Maki. The justification for continued services appears to be based on two factors: (1) Maki’s ability to translate for *kaigaishijo* who have not acquired the facility with the language that she has attained and (2) assistance for Maki in completing work after school absences.

At the primary school, Maki’s seven-year-old brother receives ESL services daily. Unlike his sister, the boy has not made satisfactory academic progress. Apparently, Maki’s younger brother confuses English and Japanese. The children’s mother explains her perception of her son’s problems as follows:

He started to speak Japanese very late: three years old. He came here just before he was four years old. He was born in Japan, but he didn’t go to kindergarten in Japan. He just started to speak Japanese when he was three over here. He’s confusing the two languages. Now, he is second grade, but his ability is not enough for both English and Japanese. It is hard to study both languages for

him, so I think he needs to study Japanese, because we will return to Japan. I think it's better in that area to catch up in Japanese. (pi-3.4.98)

Maki and her brother play together after school and usually communicate in English. Maki's mother is extremely concerned about the fact that her son learned to talk at a late age. "Children usually begin to talk somewhere between the 18th and 21st months of life and by about the fourth birthday have learned much of the fundamental structure of the language" (Lovell, 1971, p. 47). Maki's mother is disturbed about her son's poor performance at school and believes he is functioning at a level significantly below what is expected for his age. She attributes his difficulties more to permissiveness than to the possibility of learning disabilities. Based upon her own observations, Maki's mother explains her version of her son's language difficulties:

Girls speak and talk a lot. Japanese boys are quiet. Boys don't talk as much. They're more reserved. It's the involvement of language and speech ability. It takes more study to speak and write his thoughts than for [Maki]. But, I think it's hard in two languages and he needs just one language, Japanese to speak, think, and hear. Then, he won't be confused. (pi-3.4.98)

The research on vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation offer incommensurable conclusions. DeHouwer (1990) indicates that a child learning two languages similar in syntax, Dutch and English, simultaneously has little difficulty keeping the languages separate. Tsunoda (1985), on the other hand, claims that English and Japanese are drastically different and are acquired by different sides of the brain. Pronunciation is not a dominant issue in language acquisition. Some research describes phonological

carryover between languages while Fantini (1985) reports dominant phonology in one language.

Maki's case study is particularly revealing in light of her relative ease in acquiring a second language and her younger brother's extreme difficulty with two languages. Perhaps it illustrates that chronological age is less important for success in second language acquisition than first language development. Age can imply physiological development in the brain or auditory apparatus for speech development; age may be indicative of the development of short-term and long-term memory within the Piagetian cognitive development parameters; or age may indicate social development (Cook, 1995). As important as chronological age may be in acquiring a second language, it is not the only factor that influences the process. Likewise, fluency in a second language is not the only variable that affects the rate of acculturation. The problems Maki's brother is experiencing are beyond the scope of this research but are apparently related to lack of first language development (Collier, 1989; Lambert, 1984).

It is important to remember that *kaigaishijo* are bilingual but appear to use English mainly in the context of school. Maki's mother reports that only Japanese is spoken in the home among family members. Although Maki has American friends at school, she does not invite them into her home. When she attends Japanese Saturday school, Maki converses only in Japanese, a requirement of the school. She speaks with her Japanese friends in the same informal way she talks with her parents and brother. While Maki's Japanese is sufficient for ordinary conversation, she does not know how to speak according to Japanese levels of politeness. The way Maki speaks Japanese in

America is in a casual, friendly manner that will be insufficient in Japan. Maki's mother also fears that her daughter does not read Japanese well enough to comprehend grade-level school texts in Japan. She thinks her daughter's vocabulary is somewhat limited by lack of exposure to complex texts available in Japanese schools. Nevertheless, as the parent responsible for the children's education, Maki's mother is confident of her ability to help her daughter catch up to where she should be upon their return to Japan.

Maki needs no accommodations in school as a result of her apparent facility with English, both oral and written. Usually, she is well-prepared, having completed all homework assignments, answers questions when the teacher calls upon her, and raises her hand to volunteer information. Her oral responses and her written assignments are on a par with other students in her class. Regardless of the cognitive and maturational processes involved, Maki's fluency in English appears to be one of many factors that positively impacts her acculturation.

Clothing. Maki wears fashionable wire-rimmed glasses and dresses in jeans, denim overalls, T-shirts, and sweatshirts just like her American classmates. Her backpack looks like those that other students carry. Like other girls, she attaches trinkets, charms, and key chains to the zipper tab on her backpack. The fact that she participates in the current American intermediate school fad of attaching as many trinkets as possible to the zippers on backpacks attests to how fully acculturated she is. Maki readily admits that she prefers pants to skirts. Her mother explains that American clothing is inexpensive compared to anything she could purchase in Japan. She says she enjoys shopping for her children but has difficulty finding petite sizes for herself and resorts to

the junior departments for girls' clothing. By the appearance of their clothing, Maki and all the members of her family have adopted this material aspect of American culture.

Maki, much more than Ken, appears to like Japanese materials and wants to understand more about her own culture. Maki's fifth-grade teacher notes that the student wears American clothes but prefers Japanese toys, if given a choice:

That may be because we have that store in the mall that carries Japanese products. She hangs onto her Japanese culture, but she's more Americanized than she is Japanese. She doesn't really remember Japan. That's what she's told me before. All she knows is what she's learning from her mother and the things they keep alive in the home. But, she's very Americanized. (ti-12.30.98)

Artistic endeavors. Children's artistic endeavors provide insight into their place on the continuum toward complete acculturation. The activities which they participate in and spend their time in indicate what they are comfortable with and value. Artistically, Maki excels in the Japanese art of *origami*. Especially encouraged by the ESL teacher, Maki shares her expertise with her classroom friends and, as early as third grade, demonstrated the art of *origami* in several classrooms throughout the intermediate school. Maki proudly explains to her classmates that it is as a result of her grandmother's generosity that she brings to the intermediate school authentic materials such as *origami* paper unlike any available in American stores, pencil boxes containing supplies like Japanese children carry to school, Japanese toys, games, and *manga*, Japanese comics. Like her American peers who relish individual recognition for special talents or abilities, Maki appears to enjoy the notoriety that her particular skill in *origami* brings to her.

Her drawings incorporate elements of both cultures. Maki's contour line drawings, appropriate for her school assignments, appear to be similar to those American students draw. When given the opportunity to interpret an assignment involving art, Maki may incorporate elements copied from Japanese cartoons or techniques borrowed from *origami*. She understands and demonstrates her appreciation of some cultural differences through art, because she is old enough to recognize, distinguish, and appreciate differences between Japan and the United States.

Maturation. Unlike the socialization in Japanese schools that teaches students to fit in or blend with their groups, American schools and teachers encourage individualism. Being part of a school group that rewards conformity is considered a positive experience in Japan (Benjamin, 1997). Her teachers say that Maki demonstrates leadership strengths, a need to be in charge, and the ability to teach others. Friendly and forthright like her mother, Maki is a leader, not a follower, in every intermediate class. Neither is she afraid to stand out nor to demonstrate her numerous skills. She is proud of her native Japanese culture and takes every opportunity to share it. For example, in fourth grade she taught her classmates *origami*, the Japanese art of precisely folding squares of colorful paper into decorative geometric shapes. In both her fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms, she taught Japanese calligraphy to students by showing them how to write words in *hiragana*, the simplest of the Japanese syllabaries. Maturation and language development are related variables (Singleton, 1989). Maki's competent communication skills, including transmitting and receiving information, attest to normative to advanced sociocognitive development (Rosen, 1985). The more that Maki chooses to interact

within any social milieu, the more she progresses on the continuum toward complete acculturation.

In fourth grade, Maki brought *yukata*, a type of cotton kimono, to show to her classmates. She also enlisted her mother's assistance in gathering enough *yukata* from Japanese families in the community to outfit every member of her fourth-grade class for their *bon odori* performance of a Japanese summer festival dance. Maki imitated every move of the Japanese intern teacher who taught the dance and distinguished herself, again in American fashion, as one of the best dancers in her class.

Deemed mature and responsible, Maki has had frequent opportunities within the intermediate school to distinguish herself. She appeared to welcome and to enjoy these opportunities. Because she excelled in music, the school music teacher selected Maki as one of a number of instrumental soloists who performed musical selections for school board members in December, 1997. Demonstrating individuality, a concept she accepts as normal, and behaving in a mature and acceptable manner, Maki, has steadily progressed toward complete acculturation.

Maki has also willingly assisted other students in areas in which she feels competent. For example, she translated and explained assignments in Japanese to Yoko, a student who has recently arrived from Japan. Maki has also been generous in sharing treats, received as rewards in ESL class, with Yoko. On many occasions, Maki has served as a translator for Tsuneo when he has completely exasperated his teachers. Maki's teachers have unanimously agreed that the girl is kind and sensitive to the needs of other students and demonstrates her sensitivity in various ways. For example, teachers

have shared with me how impressed they are by the remarkable amount of patience Maki demonstrates. Maki has been observed to take the initiative to sit directly across from Tsuneo in the cafeteria. She has never imposed herself upon him. If he wanted to converse with her, she freely engaged in conversation but also included her friends. Intuitively, Maki seemed to know when to talk with Tsuneo and when to leave him alone, thereby demonstrating maturity beyond her actual years.

“Both maturation and learning are involved in a child’s readiness to cope”

(Lovell, 1971, p. 14). Maki, by all accounts, seems able to cope with any situation. A mature fifth grader who cares about living up to her potential, Maki is both conscientious and sensitive. Her teachers praise her for excellence in her academic work and frequently tell her what a good student she is. In turn, she thrives on the positive feedback, doubles her efforts to do her best work, and progressively learns to perform within expectations. In terms of learning styles, she appears to be an “abstract random” child (Tobias, 1994) who characteristically maintains good rapport and friendly relationships. Her nature is a unique blend of leadership skills, sensitivity to the needs of others, an ability to cope with any situation, and a desire to get along well with others of different personalities. Her friends in fifth grade include students of average intelligence as well as those who have been identified as gifted. She recognizes the emotional needs of others and attempts to assist them. Not only is Maki a good student, but she is also gifted in a way that is difficult to measure academically. Gardner (1983) describes people like Maki as interpersonally intelligent. As one who demonstrates these traits at such an early age, Maki is a mature and compassionate child whom her teachers believe is a good candidate

for one of the helping professions. She expresses no preferences, however, about what she wants to do in life.

Educational expectations. The fourth-grade teacher who has taught three of the four *kaigaishijo* in this study, asserts that Maki understands what the expectations are in the intermediate school:

[Maki] found her niche quickly. She's very assertive and self-confident and knows her place. I mean that in a very positive way. She's comfortable in the American culture and is extremely comfortable in sharing her Japanese culture. That's given her a special spotlight compared to [Yoko]. Maki has a lot of self-confidence. She's not afraid to speak out or tell you what's on her mind. If she found out she gave a wrong answer in class on a math problem, she would be very quick to say she was sorry, but she wouldn't be scared. She would giggle and say she was sorry. (ti-12.30.97)

Maki's report cards indicated that she has met expectations in conduct and work habits since first grade. Advised by the ESL supervisor to administer no grades in academic areas until students can attain at least a C in a subject, teachers have consistently recorded an A in mathematics for Maki since second grade. She has never received lower than a B in science and social studies. For the initial grading period in fifth grade, Maki, assigned to a class where identified gifted students are clustered, received an A in all four core subject areas. Her fifth-grade teacher commented on the report card that Maki had done an excellent job and had made positive contributions to the class.

A receptive attitude. Maki apparently enjoys the experience of living in the United States. She says her best friends in the intermediate school are two American girls who are always nice to her and are considerate of her feelings. Her mother explains that a number of military career families live in her neighborhood. Several families have been stationed in Japan and understand something about the culture and seem to like Japanese people. Maki's mother explained: "I'm very excited to come here! I like English very much. I wanted to be in America very much while I was in Japan. It is a dream come true!" (pi-3.4.98)

Apparently, her mother's positive attitude influences Maki. Just as her mother volunteers to work in the local hospital as a sign of her appreciation for the experience of living in this culture, Maki tries to assist other *kaigaishijo* by acting as an interpreter for them or by helping American students with math. Mother and daughter seem receptive to American culture and indebted enough for the way in which they have been received to give something of themselves in return. Through their attitude of "openness," they initiate social interaction between themselves and Americans that further reduces feelings of being "outside" of the mainstream. Their willingness to socially interact facilitates their conversational fluency and introduces a sense of cultural relativism that leads to a comfortable congruency between cultures.

Personality. Maki has been characterized by her teachers and her mother as friendly and confident, a child who is neither garrulous nor introverted but is even-tempered, kind, patient, and predictable. She quickly found her place in the American school setting. Faculty and staff members have commented on Maki's openness to

American culture and her willingness to try to understand and help others. Not a judgmental individual, Maki has accepted Americans as friends and has attempted to assist other *kaigaishijo* who are not as fully acculturated as she is. She has never displayed an arrogant attitude, regardless of the situation, and seems happiest when she thinks she has met expectations. Maki's leadership qualities and interpersonal skills have distinguished her from less mature classmates, according to the girl's teachers. Congenial and extroverted, Maki has the kind of personality that has accelerated the acculturation process.

Maki's mother, when asked to describe her daughter's personality, made the following comments:

She's very powerful, not weak, so she's strong-willed. Her character is from my husband. But, of course she can do [academic work] without me. Only first one or two years I helped, but she needs very little help now. She has very good American friends at school who have helped her very much. I think she's smart, but she doesn't like studying. All kids doesn't like studying, I think, but she never does her homework until I said to do homework. I have to encourage her. And, I think, she is kind, very kind. (pi-3.4.98)

Personality appears to impact acculturation although no empirical evidence exists to support this assumption. *Kaigaishijo* who listen and who attempt to speak English demonstrate a certain proficiency in their second language. The extrovert has a need to communicate and practices the language by interacting with speakers of the host country. The interaction hastens the acculturation process because the child chooses

to adopt patterns that preclude passivity. When Maki speaks English, she is more readily accepted as a friend by other American children. This acceptance seems to positively reinforce her extroverted tendencies. The more she communicates with Americans, the more acculturated Maki becomes.

Length of residency. Other factors, including age on arrival, appear to impact the acculturation process more than length of residency. Maki and her family have rented the same furnished house from her father's company for nearly five years. The home is located near the intermediate school. As Maki's case illustrates, length of residency is also related to the child's age upon arrival. Maki was already a fluent speaker of Japanese at the age of six when she arrived in the United States. With a cognitive advantage over her younger brother, she quickly acquired the English necessary to navigate in the American educational setting. Her brother, who had not met the maturational milestone of language acquisition by the time he was three years old, has not made the same acculturative progress as his sister in the same amount of time. Skill development in the first language significantly impacts second-language acquisition (Cummins, 1984, 1991). By the time Maki arrived at the intermediate school, certainly within the circumscribed time of 27 months that Cummins (1984) proposes for a measure of proficiency in a second language, she was already considered by teachers to be fluent in English.

The longer one lives in the host culture, the more acculturated one is expected to become. Maki demonstrates that she is comfortable living in the United States. Her younger brother, who has resided here for the same amount of time, demonstrates

marginality. Tsuneo, another *kaigaishijo* in fifth grade who, like Maki, has resided in the United States for a number of years, has not made the same progress on the continuum toward complete acculturation. Other factors, including age on arrival, appear to impact the acculturation process more than length of residency.

Family value of education. Returning to the Japanese concept of *ikagai* (that which makes life worth living) introduced in an earlier chapter may help to explain the emphasis Japanese, in general, and Maki's family, in particular, place on education. *Ikagai* and work are inseparable in the Japanese mind (Mathews, 1996; White, 1988). Part of the mother's work in life is to assume responsibility for her children's education if they are to assume productive roles in society. Therefore, the family is returning to Japan even though it means the parents will be separated. Maki's family appears to believe that one's future is integrally related to one's education. Maki apparently considers that her mother's prioritizing her children's education above all other considerations is the normal expectation. A mother should, for example, behave as her mother did when asked to gather *yukata* for all 30 students in the girl's fourth-grade class. The mother's status and respect from others is measured by the success her children achieve (Hendry, 1995; Iwao, 1993; White, 1988). The perceived risk of jeopardizing or compromising her children's futures seems too great for Maki's mother to remain any longer in this culture.

Maki is a good student, a fact her teachers pointed out to me numerous times during her sojourn in the United States. The university training required for her father to become a chemical engineer and for her mother to become a nurse indicates that her parents value education. Although Maki's mother said she appreciates the opportunity

her family has been given to experience American culture, she informed me that the express reason for her return to Japan with the two children is to ensure a rigorous education for them, additional evidence that the family values education. Maki's father will remain in the United States to work for Mitsubishi for another year or two while the children live with their mother in an apartment in Yokohama, a seaport town with good schools for *kikokushijo*.

Although Maki is four years older than Ken, she does not appear to be as fully acculturated. Her behavior is congruent with expectations in an American intermediate school and she comfortably integrates aspects of both Japanese and American life. The differences in acculturation between these two *kaigaishijo* are subtle and minute. Maki's ability to understand cultural differences and her appreciation of and preferences for Japanese materials distinguishes her from Ken. For example, she strongly identifies with Japan and is proud of her heritage. She is particularly interested in "traditional" aspects of Japanese culture such as *origami*, *bon odori* (festival) dancing, Japanese *yukata* (cotton robes), *ikebana* (flower arranging), and Japanese calligraphy. Not only does she take pride in her Japanese heritage, but she is also old enough and mature enough, unlike Ken, to recognize and understand differences represented by symbols. Ken could almost be considered the "all-American" boy. Although both students are acculturated, Maki, because she recognizes and more completely integrates Japanese aspects into her life than Ken is able to do, is not as completely or as fully acculturated.

Yoko's Story

The *kaigaishijo* who has most recently arrived at the intermediate school is not the least acculturated of the four participants. Although Yoko's English skills are limited, she makes friends easily and is exhilarated by her experiences in America. Her fourth-grade teacher describes Yoko as an asset to the class.

Yoko arrived from Japan with her parents and three younger sisters the week before winter holidays in December, 1996. The intermediate school principal took the information the father provided but advised him to wait until January to enroll Yoko. She told him that she thought the transition would be easier after the disruptive winter parties, craft activities, and school assemblies had ended. Nodding in agreement, whether or not he understood, Yoko's father closed his briefcase and motioned for his family to leave. The principal's concern was that the Japanese girl might receive an inaccurate first impression of American education if she began attending school immediately before the holidays. In other words, she figured that Yoko would think that American schooling is only about playing and having fun if she had enrolled in December.

On the first day after the holidays in January, 1997, Yoko's father, her mother, and two of her three younger sisters accompanied Yoko to the intermediate school. Yoko's other sister was already in attendance at the primary school. Yoko's mother, holding the baby in one arm and the toddler by the hand, depended solely upon her husband's translations of the conversation with the principal. Yoko did not cling to her mother. She walked confidently with the principal who led the way to the third-grade classroom.

Nine-year-old Yoko was placed in third grade on the basis of her age and report card from Obu Elementary School in Japan. The Japanese principal had certified on December 10, 1996, that Yoko had received the following grades in the third-year class: A in Japanese, social studies, and mathematics; B in sciences, music, painting, and physical education. The teacher selected for Yoko had the lowest enrollment of the eleven third grade classes at the intermediate school but had never taught an ESL student. The only other third grade teacher experienced in teaching ESL students had recently been promoted to an assistant principalship.

Cute and cheerful, Yoko waved to several students and her new teacher that first afternoon as she headed toward her bus, canary-colored bus assignment card in hand. Some of the students imitated Yoko's wave. In a manner consistent with videotaped footage of Japanese elementary students attending public school in Tokyo, Yoko rapidly waved her hand from side to side, palm open, fingers spread wide apart. Her short, quick steps, reminiscent of a toddler's walk, accentuated her diminutive size and aura of immaturity.

Yoko's boyish-looking father is an engineer at Sumitomo. The company does not specify exactly how long this family will remain in the United States, but Yoko's father thinks it will be for four or five years (pi-1.24.98). Sumitomo Machinery Company owns the two-story house with a double-car garage that Yoko's family rents during their sojourn in this Middle Atlantic state. The Japanese CEO of Sumitomo and his wife located the house where Yoko's family resides. It is not unusual for the company to locate and purchase a house for an employee to rent. In fact, as society has changed and

as it continues to become more complex with the issues of globalization, the company has been forced to assume more functions traditionally relegated to the Japanese family or neighborhood, such as helping out in times of need (Hendry, 1987).

This parent of four, Yoko's father, is the only family member who speaks enough English to communicate with Americans. Yoko's mother, who speaks no English, cares for her preschool daughters, ages four and 18 months. Yoko, who is now 10 years old and in fourth grade at the intermediate school, is progressing in her acquisition of English, her second language. Her six-year-old sister, currently in first grade at the primary school, is learning to speak English, too. Yoko reports that Japanese is spoken in her home.

One of Yoko's early journal entries in fourth grade described an anticipated family outing, a company-sponsored event. In lieu of the extended family that would have included grandparents in Japan, company families joined together for recreation.

Tomorrow going to Bush gardens I like aipengeist and roller coastrs Im going my family, dad, Tohrus family Harukas family and evryvare from Smitomo, each family going will go in own cars, we will saplite. (ysj-10.10.97)

Only twice since Yoko enrolled has her father returned to the intermediate school. Once was in January, 1998, when he and his wife appeared for a scheduled conference on a Saturday with Yoko's fourth-grade teacher. The second time was in February, 1998, when he and his family attended the annual February ice cream social, a PTA fund-raising event. Yoko, a member of the after-school dance club, performed with a group of approximately thirty students that evening. When communication with Yoko's parents is

necessary, her teacher indicated that she writes a note to the father. She had not met him before the January conference but had talked with him once on the telephone. She said she had difficulty understanding his English over the phone and in person because of the father's heavy Japanese accent.

Yoko's mother, on the other hand, has appeared at the intermediate school on numerous occasions. Although she had to bring both preschoolers, she helped as much as she could in February, 1997, when the Japanese intern teacher needed assistance in preparing handmade notes to raise money for a donation of Japanese books to the school. Since Yoko's mother was giving the baby a bottle or taking the toddler to the restroom during much of the craft period times, she joined the gatherings more for fellowship with other Japanese mothers than for preparation of goods to sell at the book fair. On several other occasions she has come to the intermediate school to bring a forgotten assignment or Yoko's lunch. Initially Yoko's lunch consisted of a sandwich in a small *furoshiki*, a cloth wrapper. Approximately two months into the school year, her lunches were packed in an American insulated bag. Finally, Yoko began to purchase school lunches in November, including chocolate milk and pizza, and declared that pizza is the best food the cafeteria makes.

The fourth-grade teacher indicated that casual encounters with Yoko's mother consist of nodding and smiling. Yoko's mother, always respectful and bowing, has never met the teacher's gaze, a sign of respect for the *sensai*, the revered teacher. When the teacher speaks to Yoko and her mother, Yoko has acted as her mother's interpreter. Consequently, the teacher has been unable to ascertain the exact content of the

information transmitted. During the course of these conversations, the mother has patted Yoko on the head and smiled.

Yoko described her family in an autobiography she was assigned to write in the spring of fourth grade. She reported how her father jogs every morning and plays golf with Sumitomo employees despite the fact that he does not enjoy golf. She evaluated her mother's role and explained how she assists her mother by helping with her baby sister:

My mom, she doesn't work so she can look after the baby and her children. My mom is an angry person when [Minami] is bad. She is a good cleaner person. She does good cooking. She has friends that come over my house. [Konatsu] is my baby sister. She lived in Japan her first four months. She'll be two in August. I play with her. Sometimes I wash her hair and give her a bath. Sometimes she does not like it. She does not eat her food when it's hot. She likes a snack like candy or coke when my sisters or I have somethings to eat that is bigger than [Konatsu's]. She begs for the bigger one. She likes drawing, she likes dance to music. When she watches T.V. she lays on floor and kicks her legs. (ysj-3.25.98)

The mother's role in acculturation. Yoko has told her teacher that her mother, not her father, helps her with her homework. On the basis of Yoko's information, the teacher has decided that the mother can read some English. Yoko's mother considers her child's educational success to be her responsibility. Her assistance with her daughter's homework is consistent with her perception of the Japanese mother's role. Only recently have mothers had the leisure time to dedicate themselves to this role. The move away from farming, coupled with the economic stability provided by the father's job, allows

the mother both the time and means to devote all of her attention to her children (Benjamin, 1997). The Japanese mother's status is very much bound up with her role as the parent who ensures the educational success of the children. "A parent, particularly the mother, is valued by the degree of commitment she is willing to put into the task of motivating her children to learn" (Studer, 1998, p. 99). The fact that the father is employed by a prestigious company enables him to financially support his wife in a manner that allows her the advantage of staying home to manage children and household finances. The parents' goal is to pass on their lifestyle to their children. One of the mother's primary responsibilities is to prepare her children to succeed at high school and college entrance exams if they are to follow in their parent's footsteps (Hendry, 1987). The mother's assumption of her role as it relates to the education of her children is the first essential element that influences a student to become acculturated.

Yoko's large family of four children is the exception rather than the rule. With the declining birthrate in Japan, the average number of children is less than two (Iwao, 1993). As long as large numbers of Japanese women take advantage of university educations and careers, the birthrate is not expected to rise. Mothers of other *kaigaishijo* explain the anomaly of the large family by saying that Yoko's mother loves children and that motherhood is respected in Japan. The effort required to meet the needs of four girls is stressful and shows in the mother's tired face and disheveled appearance.

One aspect of Yoko's mother's parenting style distinguishes her from the other Japanese mothers. She frequently purchases material goods in the form of trinkets, small toys, candy, and all sorts of hair clips and ornaments for Yoko. Perhaps Yoko's mother

feels less confident as a mother in a nuclear family in America than she would if she were rearing her daughters in Japan. She lacks English skills, does not have the support of an extended family, and attempts to figure out for herself meanings inherent in the host culture. As noted above, the dependency syndrome created by the mother tends to be focused into an “emotional blackmail.” In this case, material objects may be a postmodern form of compensation (Sarup, 1996). Material goods, in the form of tangible gifts for her child, may substitute for the mother’s lack of confidence in other areas. When the mother purchases material objects for her daughter, Yoko, in turn, should feel grateful by Japanese standards. The child becomes dependent upon her mother for the stuffed animals she collects and the cute trinkets she wears. Perhaps the gifts are given in compensation for the intangible support, such as assistance with homework and help with English that the mother cannot adequately supply. “By making their children dependent, women justify the demands of their role as mother, the result being that the more dependent the child, the more indispensable the mother is” (Iwao, 1993, p. 133). This dependency syndrome makes the Japanese mother’s life meaningful and fosters a strong relationship between mothers and their children:

Because a mother is expected to be answerable for the behavior and achievements of her children, usually without much input or burden sharing from the father, her role compels her to keep a close eye on them, and ensuring that they are dependent rather than independent is the best way to monitor behavior. In turn, children develop exceedingly strong attachments to their mothers. It tends to be even stronger if the father is absent a great deal and no other adult is present to

offer an alternative companionship or viewpoint. (Iwao, 1993, pp. 134-135)

Yoko's mother appears at the school at least once a week, visibly tired and with the two preschoolers, to bring lunch, lunch money, or an assignment that Yoko may have forgotten. While Yoko was "student of the week," a weekly event in her class, her mother made daily trips to the school to bring a large teddy bear from Yoko's collection and souvenirs gathered from trips in Japan. On her daughter's final day in the spotlight, the mother made a special trip to the candy store in the mall to buy confections in a flavor specified by Yoko. The teacher was impressed by the mother's solicitous behavior. She commented that few American mothers, who should understand educational expectations, put forth the same kind of concentrated efforts for their children.

Language acquisition. Euphoric during her first week in fourth grade, and perhaps glad to be back in the company of children her age, Yoko steadily withdrew and appeared depressed by the end of the second week of school. Her teacher reported that Yoko did not understand any directions given in the classroom and would neither ask nor answer questions. The teacher told me that she felt guilty for not realizing that Yoko was unable to read cursive handwriting. All assignments were written in cursive on the board. Although she had taught three other *kaigaishijo*, the teacher said that Yoko's English skills were the lowest. In reading Yoko's cumulative records, the teacher noticed that the Limited English Proficiency committee of this intermediate school had convened in March, 1997, and had decided in Yoko's best interests to exempt her from standardized achievement testing required by the state department of education. The committee

members felt that Yoko would experience extreme difficulty with comprehension of the written material even under non-standard testing accommodations that would allow the test administrator to read passages to her.

“My responsibility is just to make her feel safe in [the class]. My goal for her is that she does more than she did when she came in,” the classroom teacher explained. She also hopes the ESL teacher will provide the specific tutoring in English that Yoko desperately needs, because the classroom affords few opportunities for one-on-one sessions. “I want her to get saturated with friendship in the classroom and understand what America is about,” the teacher told me (ti-12.30.97).

Many teachers assume that students learn the same way they do. Yoko’s teacher does not make that assumption and believes herself to have the innate ability to sense nuances in students’ learning styles (ti-12.30.97). She has taught each *kaigaishijo* with different methods. She attempts to tailor her teaching to their needs. The teacher understands that Yoko came to her class without the basic English skills of other *kaigaishijo* whom she has taught. Building on Yoko’s friendliness and interpersonal strengths, the teacher adapts instruction to meet the child’s needs and pairs Yoko for certain periods of time with various students in the class. The teacher recognizes students’ modality preferences and takes those into consideration when she sets up cooperative groups. Confident of her teachings abilities, the classroom teacher builds on Yoko’s strengths (co-9.8.97; ti-9.15.97; co-10.9.97; co-11.1.97; ti-12-30-97).

Initially, in her ESL class Yoko would only nod and smile at the teacher. She seemed shy and embarrassed because the teacher guided her pronunciation of every word

in pre-primer books. The ESL teacher was excited when she finally stumbled across the fact that Yoko enjoys silly stories.

Pointing her finger at each word she was reading, Yoko's progress in a week seemed remarkable. She read much more fluently than she had the week before. The fictitious story about a goat's eating habits was most amusing. At the part in the story where the goat's mother cut up rubber heels from shoes and sliced them onto the goat's plate, Yoko looked puzzled. The ESL teacher pointed to her shoes. Yoko made no response nor gave any sign of comprehension. I took off my shoe and pointed specifically to the heel before I touched the rubber sole of Yoko's shoe. Suddenly, Yoko tipped her head back and laughed out loud. She became so tickled that she could hardly read. The visual cues had helped her understand the story. From that point on, she read more confidently and rarely pointed to a word. The illustration on the final page pictured a goat eating a sensible breakfast with his parents. Yoko pointed to the foods she recognized and named them as eggs and orange juice. She had the happiest expression I had seen on her face in four weeks! (co-9.26.97)

Only a few days later, Yoko's classroom teacher reported that the girl was finally emerging from her shell. Elated that Yoko was interacting with other students and attempting to verbalize her thoughts in English, the teacher's concern, however, was that Yoko's parents were pressuring her to do homework that she was not yet capable of doing. The teacher felt that Yoko's English skills were inadequate in October for her to successfully complete all social studies, science, and reading assignments. Once, after

Yoko had insisted that she wanted to do a social studies assignment, the girl told the teacher that the English was too difficult for her to read. Yoko experienced no difficulty with math and seemed to be on a more advanced level than her peers, a fact attributable to the accelerated math program at Japanese Saturday school.

During that same week, the ESL teacher noted a breakthrough in Yoko's writing. She had written in her student journal the first story summary that made sense:

He is hippo. He is fat and he is pople He eats lifes and gress He livs on land bat he want to waters he go's to a mountain to toack to Lion who is Ngai, god of everything and evryvare. Hippo asks Ngai, "Can I live in the rivers and streams?" Ngai tinkng "Eat all of my little fishs!!" Hippo promised that he would not eat the fish and he going to home to the river he in the waters open his huge mouth wide to show Ngai the no fish. (ysj-10.2.97)

When Yoko became frustrated or impatient with her inability to communicate with her classroom teacher, she resorted to drawing. For example, she wanted to call her mother but did not know how to ask her teacher to allow her to go to the office to use the telephone. Through drawings and pantomime, Yoko made herself understood. From that point forward, if she needed to telephone her mother, she said, "Phone home." Once her teacher had told her the words she was searching for, Yoko had no difficulty remembering them.

To boost Yoko's self-esteem and to put her in a position to assist another student, the teacher decided to pair her with a boy in the class who was experiencing difficulties in all core subjects but particularly in math. The teacher thought that Yoko might focus less

on her inability to read and speak English fluently if she could help a student in her area of expertise, mathematics. The teacher was surprised at the outcome:

Oh my gosh! It was a miracle! Yoko would help Matt. She became his teacher in some areas. He cannot take on more than two directions at a time. Well, neither can she, yet. He does one direction at the time. She would give him the second step and show him how to do it. He, in turn, would help her with letters and words. I saw this wonderful friendship develop. Well, he got a crush on her. She, in turn, started liking him. I had to separate them! I was not expecting that at all! That normally doesn't happen in fourth grade. They would do nothing but sit with their heads together giggling and playing. She loved it that he's so mischievous. (ti-12.30.97)

After observing how Yoko gravitated to certain girls on the playground, the teacher decided to move her away from the boy and pair her with Katie. Yoko and Katie became inseparable. They ate lunch together, played together outdoors, and helped each other with classroom assignments. Although this twosome seemed to be working well, the teacher said she was once again contending with the giggling and mischievousness that she had noticed when Matt and Yoko had worked together. The teacher also thought that Yoko was outgrowing Katie, a student of average intelligence. Although the teacher noted improvement in Yoko's level of confidence by the end of October, she decided to assign a more serious-minded partner to restrain the girl's mischievous nature.

Yoko is steadily gaining confidence in her ability to communicate. The whole point of acculturation, however, is not to speak the language fluently but to feel

comfortable in the host culture. Once that level of comfort is achieved, as Yoko's case demonstrates, the language appears to flow.

Clothing. Yoko's clothing is the most distinctly Japanese of the four *kaigaishijo*. "Her clothes, you can tell, don't come from here," her teacher stated. "She wears Japanese clothes and especially likes the Sanrio label." Instead of wearing the typical jeans and sweatshirts that most girls in the intermediate grades prefer, Yoko originally appeared in a two-piece outfit of red plaid wool. She is pictured in the same ensemble in the professional portrait made in Japan and displayed on the board for student of the week. Several of Yoko's navy and white nautical outfits are distinguished by the Japanese Sanrio label attached conspicuously to a collar or sleeve. Her Japanese navy or white ribbed knee socks with ruffles at the top are not at all like sneaker socks or tights worn by American girls. Some of her clothing may be parts of Japanese school uniforms. Sailor outfits are typical attire for girls in Japan. Uniforms are regarded with a sense of pride among Japanese because of their deeper significance. Uniforms identify children as students at certain schools, adults as public servants, and families on holidays preparing to participate in festivals requiring the summer kimono or *yukata* (Lapenta, 1984).

To become part of a group by wearing the same kind of clothes seems to repress individuality in the Western mind. Westerners do not understand that "becoming part of a group entails...a loss of privacy" (Mura, 1991, p. 208). Conformity, community, and harmony are more important to Japanese than individualism. "Japanese regard themselves as one huge family" (Mura, 1991, p. 208).

Sometimes Yoko has dressed inappropriately for the weather. On a cool day she may have worn shorts and a sleeveless Sanrio blouse instead of long pants and a sweatshirt. When her mother purchases something new, such as the floral windbreaker, Yoko tends to wear it each day, all day long, for a month or more. After the winter break, however, Yoko began wearing jeans, T-shirts, and sneakers like American girls were wearing. With two preschoolers to care for, Yoko's mother may have had little time for shopping or assisting her eldest daughter with daily clothing selections. Yoko wants to fit in with her peers. Wearing clothes like they wear is one way to do it. The fact that she is beginning to wear American clothes is a sign that she is progressing on the continuum toward complete acculturation.

Artistic endeavors. Children's drawings and artistic endeavors comprise the fourth facet of the acculturation process. Children's drawings are particularly important in that they provide "a window through which the development of perception, thought and emotion can all be observed" (Light & Barnes, 1995, p. 232). The influence of Japanese cartoons, tiny figures with large heads and bulging eyes, is obvious in Yoko's pencil drawings. Not confident about her artistic abilities, Yoko, nevertheless, tries to meet the teacher's expectations. She is not particularly skilled in arts and crafts. Her renderings of Halloween costumes that she and her sisters wore were on a par with drawings of most students in fourth grade. Yoko's simple drawings are distinguished by their resemblance to girls' faces in Japanese comic books. These characters are fat-faced and cherubic, wide-eyed and innocent. Yoko tends to copy Maki's drawings when the ESL teacher allows the girls to work together. The way Yoko draws may indicate how she sees the

world around her. As expected at this point in the acculturation process, most of Yoko's drawings reflect some residual influence of Japanese culture.

Maturation. Yoko is mischievous and fun-loving. She lives up to her father's description in a letter to the teacher in which he alluded to his cultural perspective that girls are playful and not as serious about their studies as boys (pi-9.5.97). Although her fourth-grade teacher does not want to dampen the girl's spirits, she feels that she must direct her behavior to meet culturally-appropriate expectations.

In the relaxed American classroom atmosphere where the discovery model is often employed, Yoko frequently approaches learning in a playful manner consistent with her personality. Her regular classroom teacher is also a firm believer in making learning fun:

I know she's getting the tutoring she needs from her ESL teacher. School stuff she's going to get in there [ESL] with her. Real life stuff she's going to get in my classroom and on the playground. They're not just going to sit there and listen to an adult drone on. If they [*kaigaishijo*] aren't given a lot of hands-on things to do, there's no way for them to spread their wings and learn. I love play. Play is important to me. If I can turn it into learning, that's even better. If ESL children do not have an easygoing, caring teacher able to individualize for students, they will not make it in the classroom. A teacher who can't do that has no business having an ESL child. I'm adamant about that. (ti-12.30.98)

Yoko's nature impacts the manner in which she deals with the challenges of her new environment. While some *kaigaishijo* seek to please the teacher and follow

directions implicitly all the time, others, like Yoko, need a social base before learning can take place. Sometimes in the school cafeteria, for example, Yoko sucks chocolate milk into a straw and blows it across the table or tosses an empty milk carton to attract the attention of other students. She imitates behaviors she observes among American students in hopes that she can focus some attention on herself. Some of the choices Yoko makes seem inappropriate and immature for her age.

Yoko's teacher discovered that the girl needs friends and wisely encourages that kind of interaction in her classroom. The teacher makes these observations:

I think, initially, language is not as important as being open to your peers. I think that's the most important. [Maki] was wide open to anything anyone wanted to share and, in return, she was willing to share. [Yoko] is a little more reserved, maybe uncertain, but as she's opened up and shown her more playful side, she's also become more confident and she can talk to her peers more; I think all that plays into a comfort zone, and then you start experimenting, and with more verbal skills comes more confidence. I also think the confidence to be who she is comes from home. (ti-12.30.97)

Only an intuitive and vigilant teacher like Yoko's is able to sense that the girl's social needs are prerequisite to learning. Therefore, the teacher is able to tolerate rather than squelch Yoko's mischievousness as she guides her in reaching a satisfactory equilibrium.

Yoko, a member of a family of four girls, is not a particularly serious student. At times, she neither listens nor focuses attentively. Listening skills are extremely important

with language learning. When Yoko giggles or trades trinkets with other girls in her class, she is not attending to the lesson. Her playfulness appears to be an aspect of her personality. Her forgetfulness and inappropriate behaviors may be signs of immaturity.

Educational expectations. Acculturation entails much more than listening to and learning the language of the host country. It includes understanding what the culture values and how individuals relate to one another. By definition, acculturation means accepting the host culture but not assimilating. Yoko, by her teacher's perceptive description, tends to be a follower rather than a leader. Yoko is a product of Japanese education where being a part of a group is the expectation. Yoko appears through her behavior to want to be accepted by her peers. The strong emphasis on the importance of individual autonomy in an American intermediate school is a new concept for Yoko. While individualism is the norm in American schools, civility and egalitarianism shape Japanese life:

American kids are taught to be winners, to seize their opportunities and maybe the next kid's as well. Japanese children are taught to be good citizens, to be team players, to obey rules, to be content to be a mosaic tile in some larger design. (Kristof, 1998, p. 7)

Socialization is a part of any education, but the expectations are not the same in Japan as in America. Yoko attended school in Japan until she came to the United States at approximately mid-year of third grade. Different expectations require of Yoko a different orientation toward education and self-concept. To make the adjustment easier, Yoko's classroom teacher uses integrative strategies. She pairs the girl with various

students in the classroom. She also encourages Yoko to join in student games on the playground. The teacher frequently gives Yoko opportunities to serve as a classroom helper and student of the week. Yoko, in turn, participates in activities as well as she can; she imitates behavior; she follows the lead of others; she tries to make friends. By guiding Yoko's class participation and encouraging her to speak in front of her classmates, the teacher is trying to accelerate the acculturation process. Yoko is gradually making sense of the intermediate school requirements. She walks to the ESL classroom, the office, restroom, and clinic by herself; she tries to answer questions if the teacher calls on her in the classroom; she asks for assignments and attempts to do them even when the teacher feels that certain work is beyond her capability (ti-12.30-97). As Yoko understands educational expectations, she progresses on the continuum toward complete acculturation.

A receptive attitude. Yoko's entire family participates in the celebration of American holidays, including Halloween and Christmas. The majority of Japanese, in fact, celebrate numerous holidays and *matsuri*, or festivals, both Japanese and American (Christopher, 1983). It is difficult to fully comprehend and appreciate the complexity of Japanese culture because Japanese are adept at integrating and juxtaposing a variety of cultural perspectives. Of the 14 national holidays, the "New Year's celebration is the biggest event on the calendar in Japan, and all companies and government offices are closed for the first three days of the year" (International Society for Educational Information, Inc., 1996, p. 116). Christmas, without its religious connotation, is celebrated in many Buddhist Japanese homes in Japan and abroad. A Christmas tree is

decorated and gifts are exchanged (tsj-12.19.97). Every Japanese prefecture (regional district) has its particular festivals that are managed and modified according to individual preferences of the locality and the cultural principle of age that affects position in community affairs (Ashkenazi, 1990). Colorful, exciting, solemn, mystical, amusing, and elaborate festival celebrations span all four seasons and are as common in small villages as in metropolitan areas like Tokyo (Scott, 1996).

Yoko shared with the ESL teacher that her entire family joined in the celebration of Halloween. To fun-loving Yoko, trick-or-treating was made for children like her. On the morning of October 31, 1997, she wrote the following entry in her journal:

Happy Halloween Todays morning 5:00 clock my sister come to my room She said "Hey wake up" "Why" said I She say "Today is Halloween" "hey I'm going to night" said she said "Ok" end!! (ysj-10.31.97)

During the week after Halloween, Yoko drew pictures and tried to describe the variety of treats received and the details of the costumes that she and her sisters had worn. She capably illustrated her witch outfit, one sister's princess costume, and the baby's clown suit. The ESL teacher and I took turns, however, at guessing what kind of animal the other costume represented. When we were unsuccessful, Yoko, in a burst of inspiration, added to her drawing a long tail with spikes on it. At that point, we correctly identified the dinosaur costume. Using only a few words accompanied by her pictures, Yoko communicated to us that her mother had accompanied them through the neighborhood while her father had stayed home to distribute her favorite kind of candy, the American Tootsie pop.

Yoko's parents seem to be receptive to American culture. In addition to allowing their daughters to participate in the celebration of Halloween, these Japanese parents appear to want Yoko to enjoy and learn from as many new experiences as possible. For example, Yoko participates in dance club that meets after school on a weekly basis. At the conclusion of dance club, Yoko's mother promptly arrives with her three younger daughters to take Yoko home. Yoko is allowed to "sleep over" at a friend's house (ksj-11.6.97). When Yoko forgets to bring materials she needs for school, such as the recorder her parents had purchased for her to play in music class, her mother delivers it within 15 minutes of Yoko's telephone call (co-12.1.97).

Personality. Yoko, initially elated by the prospects of living in the United States, seemed somewhat disillusioned at the beginning of fourth grade when she realized the inadequacy of her English skills (pi-9.3.97). Yoko's facial expression was solemn during the first several weeks of fourth grade. Her rounded shoulders and downcast look indicated to her teacher that something was wrong. When the teacher watched how Yoko tried to make friends on the playground, she decided to pair the girl with another student in the class. Yoko willingly assisted the classmate who was experiencing difficulty in math, Yoko's area of academic strength. The teacher felt that Yoko's ability to render some assistance boosted her self-esteem (ti-12.30.97). As Yoko began to relax and to smile, her facial expressions and her body language indicated that she was feeling comfortable in the environment of fourth grade.

Yoko does not fit the stereotype of the serious, zealous, over-achieving Japanese student. She giggles in class, passes notes containing her drawings to friends, and prefers

silly stories to books pertaining to academic subject matter. Interestingly, some of the same characteristics that delineate the girl's lack of understanding of social norms are indicative of her expressive personality. Yoko experiences cognitive development through interactive play when she communicates with and learns from other children (Hannaford, 1995). When her fun-loving, ebullient personality surfaces and Yoko reaches out to other children through play and overtures of friendship, she accelerates her acculturation.

The culture in which a child is reared shapes the personality (Benjamin, 1997; Benedict, 1946; Honigmann, 1967; Iwao, 1993; Lovell, 1971). Yoko is a delightful child with a charming personality. Old enough to have experienced education in the most communitarian of societies, Yoko is now being exposed to possibly the most individualistic of societies. She is becoming more independent each day in the intermediate school. The experience of living in the United States should provide Yoko the opportunity to develop the interpersonal strengths she has already exhibited. Due to her genuine friendliness and what can only be described as an extroverted personality, Yoko is not only functioning, but she is also rapidly integrating into the host culture.

Yoko is fortunate to have developed a friendship with Maki. She wrote the following entry in her journal shortly before Maki returned to Japan:

I'm sad [Maki] moving Japan. I like [Maki] because my good friend. I did sleepingover for [Maki] two times at [Maki's] house I talk with [Maki] about Japanese aidle [idol] who is a singer. I have two CD's and books and video. [Maki] coming my house and playing for game and eat a Japaneses food and I

like going [Maki's] house. I like [Maki's] brother two. I write litter [letter] for [Maki] when she is in Japan. (ksj-2.17.98)

Yoko's desire to cultivate friendships is consistent with her extroverted personality. As the most recent *kaigaishijo* to arrive, she is able to share popular Japanese culture with Maki and, thereby, to contribute to the friendship. We can only intuit that she is able to learn, in turn, more about American culture from a knowledgeable and friendly *kaigaishijo* who has lived here nearly five years.

Length of residency. Yoko has resided in the United States for a little over a year, the least amount of time of the four *kaigaishijo* studied. She is not as fully acculturated as Ken and Maki who have been educated and socialized in American schools. She is, however, further along on the continuum than Tsuneo, the fourth *kaigaishijo* of this study. Children below the age of 11 can cross cultural boundaries and imitate the prevailing behaviors with relative ease, because they have "not yet reached that stage of maturity which would enable them to become aware of the existence of a system of meanings, or to abstract a system of meanings underlying concrete behavior" (Minoura, 1979, p. 387). Yoko is acculturating rapidly. She appears to switch easily from Japanese patterns at home to American ones at school. Although she was born in Japan and educated there for all except the last year of her life, she is able to flexibly behave as the situation dictates, an indication that she is acculturating. Length of residency in Yoko's case has less impact on acculturation than her desire to be accepted by other children. She is rapidly acculturating due to her extroverted personality and her receptive attitude rather than the length of time she has resided in the United States.

Family value of education. Yoko's mother, as busy as she is with the responsibility of rearing four daughters, appears to take seriously her duty as a Japanese mother to instill in Yoko the need for doing well in school. Yoko explains to her teacher that her mother, not her father, helps with homework (ti-12.30.97). "To Japanese women, motherhood is a profession, demanding and prestigious, with education of the child the number-one responsibility" (Simons, 1987, p. 46). Although Yoko's mother apparently reads and understands some English, she is not confident of her ability to speak the language publicly and relies heavily on her husband and daughter for translations. Yoko insists that her parents want her to bring home additional homework despite the teacher's hesitancy. Her father, whose English is apparently better than her mother's second-language skills, writes all the notes to Yoko's teacher. Through their involvement in their daughter's daily homework assignments and their contacts with her teacher, Yoko's parents demonstrate their value of education.

Tsuneo's Story

Tsuneo, a fifth grader and the youngest of three children in his family, has attended schools in both Japan and America. Although he has lived in the United States for nearly four years on his second sojourn, he is the least acculturated of the four children in this study. He is also the oldest of the *kaigaishijo*.

The son of an engineer who graduated from a Japanese technical school, Tsuneo was born in California in December, 1986. His family was en route to New Jersey where his father had been transferred by Sumitomo Machinery. The family's two daughters attended public school in New Jersey. Only two years old when his father was sent back

to Japan, Tsuneo and his family remained there through the boy's kindergarten and first-grade years.

Offered a second assignment in the United States, Tsuneo's father received a bonus for returning in April, 1994. This time Tsuneo's father purchased a home for his family instead of renting one from the company. The two-story contemporary dwelling, quite large by American standards, is located on a landscaped half-acre lot in an affluent subdivision. The family also owns both a new Cadillac that Tsuneo's mother drives and a late-model Jaguar driven by Tsuneo's father.

Like the fathers of other *kaigaishijo*, Tsuneo's father spends long hours at his job and has little time at home with his family during the week. When he is not playing golf with company employees on weekends, Tsuneo's father occasionally plans something special for his son, such as taking him fishing or attending sports car shows. These outings mean a lot to Tsuneo:

I like to go fishing. First time I ever went fishing, I was seven. My dad is the one who always take me fishing. I going to fishing thirty times. One time I used shrimp as bait and dad and I caught twenty fish. When I used lure for caught big fish, no fish anymore. That make me mad. So, most times I used shrimps. Next time I go fishing probably Sunday. I excited. (tsj-9.24.97).

During the time that Tsuneo has been a student at the intermediate school, his teachers have consistently related their concerns about the boy to his parents and the school administrators. They have said that Tsuneo does not seem to like school, attempts to speak little English, never turns in his homework, and has no friends in their

classrooms. He has received ESL assistance since second grade for a total of forty months yet rarely speaks in sentences.

When teachers have asked for conferences with the parents, both of them have attended the meetings at the intermediate school. A school administrator has also attended most of the conferences. The father has done the talking while the mother has appeared to be reticent, reserved, and somewhat shy. She has politely deferred to her husband and has spoken almost reverentially in Japanese to him, but she has appeared to understand the English conversation. She has nodded throughout the conversations between teachers and her husband, who speaks fluent English, but she has never made any comments.

Only one teacher, a male who taught Tsuneo in third grade, seemed to be on congenial terms with the boy's father. Tsuneo's other teachers have reported to school administrators that the Japanese father's demeanor has consistently been condescending and impatient. Tsuneo's fourth-grade teacher explained:

In working with his father last year, I will say there was no respect for the teacher at all. Right away, I was to blame for anything that was wrong. If he wasn't getting it, it was understood that it was because I wasn't doing my job. The boy was fine. There was nothing wrong with him, according to his father. Lots of excuses: a Japanese boy; his culture is Japanese. I think at home they really squelched any Americanization that they could for him. And, it was never emphasized that he should try and speak English, and they didn't want me to push him. We weren't getting support from his father. I think a lot of his stubbornness

comes because he knows his dad is backing him up. I saw a very smart boy, clever is probably more accurate than smart, and manipulative. He knew that anything I was going to do, his dad would override. I would describe his dad as aggressive and not diplomatic at all. So, it was pretty easy for [Tsuneo] to get away with whatever he wanted to get away with. He didn't work up to his potential as much as we all tried. (ti-12.30.97)

The mother's role in acculturation. The father's prominent role in the son's schooling is unusual compared to the other children in this study. With the other three students in this study, the mother plays a significant role in the acculturation process. Unlike mothers of other *kaigaishijo* who are frequently seen dropping off a forgotten assignment or a stringed instrument, Tsuneo's mother appears only for specific functions.

When Tsuneo was in fourth grade, his mother joined Maki's mother in gathering enough *yukata* (informal cotton robes) to outfit the students in their children's class. The Japanese intern teacher taught *bon odori* festival dances to students on that grade level. The class to which Maki and Tsuneo were assigned was the only one given the opportunity to wear traditional costumes because of the efforts of their mothers. Both Japanese mothers brought large cloths called *furoshiki* filled with enough *yukata* to dress all 30 students. Maki's mother explained that she and Tsuneo's mother wanted their children to learn more about Japanese culture. Tsuneo's body language, however, told his teacher and all who watched the dancing practices that he cared little for the activity. In fact, he shared with his teacher that he would rather draw pictures of cars than dance. The teacher described what happened when the children began their performance:

[Tsuneo's] mother came in and brought the video camera but would not use it.

She handed it to [Maki's] mother to use. She would not take a front seat to anything. She stayed in the background and I thought that was very withdrawn.

(ti-12.30.97)

Tsuneo's mother has not acculturated to the United States. Although she willingly allowed all three children to be interviewed, she refused to participate. Their mother, according to Tsuneo and his sisters, has never assisted any of them with homework. They offered no explanation, but they did not seem to think it was unusual. They described their mother as a good cook and said the entire family prefers her home cooking to restaurant food. For his school lunch, Tsuneo has frequently brought *bento*, a Japanese boxed lunch complete with chopsticks, containing his mother's vegetable *sushi* and *onigiri*, rice balls wrapped in seaweed.

Japanese mothers feel that their children's educational success is primarily their responsibility. "Good" mothers dedicate themselves to encouraging their children to do their best work (Iwao, 1993). Unlike Ken's mother, a certified teacher, or Maki's mother, a nurse, Tsuneo's mother's training after high school consisted of a secretarial course. She appears to be tentative about her ability when it comes to academic endeavors. The lack of university training may account for some of her uncertainty.

Sixteen-year-old Marika, Tsuneo's elder sister, said her family discussed the opportunity to come to the United States for a second time before the decision to move was actually made. All three children thought the experience would be exciting, but it turned out to be more complex than any of them had anticipated. Marika explained:

It was a lot harder than I thought, because I'd lost the language and so much more. At first, I hated my mother and, then, I hated my father for bringing me here and leaving my friends in Japan. I had nobody here. I couldn't talk or express myself. I was a good student in Japan but not here. It shook my confidence. I stayed totally to myself for three months and I didn't even want to come to school. Finally, I told myself that I could do it. Now, my grades are good and I can express myself. Nobody motivated me to do it. I did it myself. I made a friend named Kathryn who helped me a lot. She seemed interested and kind. Nobody in our neighborhood seemed to like us. I don't know if they do even now. They don't seem to like foreigners. (esi-11.7.98)

Intelligent and perceptive, Marika understands the marginal status of *kaigaishijo*.

She developed a friendship with an American student who helped her through her difficulties. She found solace in conversing with others whose experiences had been similar to hers. In fact she ran up several expensive telephone bills talking with her Japanese boyfriend, a *kikokushijo* preparing to enter a private university in Japan.

Children at an early developmental stage can move easily between cultures before they attach meanings to symbolic systems (Minoura, 1979). As a young child, Marika never considered the fact that moving from one cultural setting to another might be unusual for a family to do. Tsuneo was much too young at two years of age when his family returned to Japan to recognize any cultural differences (Minoura, 1979). School had always been Marika's haven. She had always been a good student until the current move to the United States. She also acknowledged that all of her frustrations cannot be

attributed to her marginal status. Marika distinguished between typical adolescent problems, such as attaining permission to drive the family car or having to use her earnings from a weekend job to pay her long-distance telephone bills, and the marginality she experienced at school before she regained her fluency in English. She felt that the problems of adolescence were easier to deal with than educational and cultural expectations over which students have little control. (esi-7.29.97)

The other mothers of *kaigaishijo* in this study have monitored homework and have been involved to greater degrees in the academic lives of their children than Tsuneo's mother. The relationship between Tsuneo's mother and her children appears to be distant instead of close and nurturing. Although she cares for her family's physical needs, this Japanese mother does not foster the dependency typical in most Japanese families. Japanese mothers typically play two supportive roles while their children are students. They meet their children's physical needs and provide emotional support:

They absorb the frustrations and rebellion children sometimes feel about the demands of school, and they do this not by heavy-handed authoritarian methods, which they feel are not successful in the long run, but by sympathy, cajoling, support, and encouragement. By both Japanese and American standards this is hard work, difficult in conception and tedious in execution. (Benjamin, 1997, p.197)

An important aspect to consider with respect to all of the Japanese mothers in this study, but especially with Tsuneo's mother, is the relationship of past experiences to the present. The three other mothers continue, in characteristic Japanese fashion, to foster the

relationship of dependence between their children and themselves. Unlike the other mothers, this is the second sojourn in the United States for Tsuneo's mother. She, of all of the mothers, should have known what to expect, but her children have experienced difficulties in adjusting to American culture. She is older than the mothers of Ken, Maki, and Yoko and finds herself alone in an affluent neighborhood without the support system of mothers her age that is in place in Japan. Having lived in both Japan and America, she knows about the material comforts and independence that living in the United States brings. Her family owns a large house and two automobiles that a family of five living on an engineer's salary in Japan would be unlikely to afford. She cannot undermine her husband by being critical of his success in his job and the opportunity he has taken to increase the family's financial status by coming again to America to work. Perhaps Tsuneo's mother senses the discontinuity of her life. "It is often the case that discrepancies between what we expect and what we actually experience (disconnections or contradictions) make people aware of themselves and their identity" (Sarup, 1996, p.172).

Marika shared with her high school English teacher that her family had no resources in English, only Japanese books and videotapes at home. The ESL teacher decided to give them a set of reference books he no longer used. His good intentions triggered some reactions from the mother that he had not anticipated:

I explained that it was only an old [encyclopedia] set and not of a great amount of value or anything. Their mother just broke down and cried out on the porch! She said that was the first act of kindness she'd received in a long time, because she

was not getting along with her neighbors. They couldn't talk to her. Now, this is a very upperclass neighborhood. They were not snubbing her because of her ethnic background. It's simply that she could not communicate with her neighbors. It's a lot easier for you to make a friend with somebody you can talk to than with someone you can't. I tried to console her by putting my arm around her. What a mistake! They don't touch like Americans. She backed up and went into another whole zone of crying! (ti-8.27.97)

Perhaps Tsuneo's mother felt entirely isolated due to her lack of English skills. She appeared to be shy and withdrawn. She may not have felt confident of her ability to assist her children with their studies since she had no college education.

Language acquisition. Tsuneo prefers to do only art projects. When pressured to write in his journal, he performs the task grudgingly. In September, he wrote:

Yesterday was a normal Monday. When I got to school, I felt very awake, which is unusual because I go to bed late. After the Daily Language, I went to ESL. I working on new story. After ESL, I went back to class and we are studying decimals in math. After math, I ate lunch with nobody beside me. I feel lonely. After lunch, we went outside to run we had not time to play because it was raining. We went inside for homework check. And pack up to go school buses. It was a decent day. (tsj-9.16.97)

Language is a tool and a means of expression that connects us with other human beings and the culture in which we find ourselves. Tsuneo, like his mother, tends to be shy and introverted. Although he verbalizes few of his thoughts, he expresses himself

well in written English. Like his mother, he feels lonely and, perhaps, separated from any sense of community or feeling of belonging that he once knew. “Perhaps the values of parents are introjected in non-verbal ways” (Sarup, 1996, p. 172) into the child. Oral communication reduces the barriers to acculturation and Tsuneo chooses not to talk.

Tsuneo’s mastery of written English as opposed to spoken English, as the following journal entry indicates, is obviously quite creative and somewhat humorous. The ESL teacher believes that the fact that he has never been able to think of a name other than *Itachi* (Japanese for ferret) for his pet ferret may have inspired the story:

Once upon a time there was a ferret named Chocolate. She lived in a chocolate house. Her breakfast was chocolate sandwich with chocolate syrup, chocolate chips and chocolate milk. After breakfast, she went friend Moose’s house. But, she had stomach ache. She thought Moose give chocolate to make her feel better. So, she asked Moose for chocolate mousse. “Yes” Moose said, “Mousse is my specialty.” She ate it but she felt worse. Even her teeth hurt. Moose asked, “What you eat breakfast?” When Moose found out that all Chocolate had eaten was chocolate, she was amazed and sorry she had given her chocolate mousse. Then Moose cooked healthy meal to make Chocolate feel better. She fixed food chocolate never had tried before. Chocolate loved the food. She never knew things that weren’t chocolate could be so good. She felt better. She went grocery store to buy healthy food and decided to sell her chocolate house to Hansel and Gretel. To much of a good thing can be bad. (tsj-11.5.97)

Lovell (1971) points out that language reorders experiences and provides the

means to elevate thought to higher levels. Research also supports that internalized speech plays a large part in the development of logical thought (Lovell, 1971). Tsuneo's writing, despite his mistakes, demonstrates his understanding and command of English consistent with average expectations for grammar and his ability to logically construct a fable.

What is astounding about the piece is its exceptional creativity.

"If you can't speak the language, everything is hard," Marika emphasized.

According to Tsuneo's sister, only Japanese is spoken in their home. If there were a way to encourage parents of *kaigaishijo* to practice English skills at home with their children, the communication process would be accelerated. That responsibility would fall directly on the mother's shoulders, because Japanese fathers work long hours and are usually unavailable to assist their children during the week. By all accounts, Tsuneo's mother speaks only Japanese with her children.

No correspondence exists between certain phonemes in English and Japanese.

My observation demonstrates that even as late as fifth grade Tsuneo had difficulty pronouncing words and may not have been getting the help he needed:

Tsuneo and the ESL teacher were reading a children's book entitled I Hate English. He refused to read pages filled entirely with print. Instead, he read the small amount of print on pages containing illustrations and struggled with the same phonemes that present problems for all *kaigaishijo*. The ESL teacher never offered to show Tsuneo where to place his tongue in order to pronounce the "l," "ph," and "r" sounds. (co-9.18.97)

Although pronunciation is not as important as vocabulary and syntax in language

acquisition, Tsuneo's inability to pronounce certain words may have inhibited him from speaking in complete sentences. When pressured to communicate, Tsuneo, according to his teachers, always answered in a grunt or with as few words as possible. Teachers at the intermediate school have never allowed students to make fun of Tsuneo. Unlike his loquacious older sister, Tsuneo seldom speaks. Marika, a member of the high school band who has developed many friendships, has sought opportunities outside to practice English. Tsuneo's only contact with the language is in the formal classroom setting.

Social skills impact oral language and vice versa. Marika's English is peppered with idioms and slang. She articulates well and speaks without an accent. Interacting with members of the host culture and wanting to be accepted facilitates language acquisition, as the following incident related by an ESL teacher illustrates:

I was over at a Japanese family's house. They had a second grader. As I was walking up to the porch, I noticed in back of me that he was talking to one of the middle school kids, an American kid, one of the kind of rough kids. The little Japanese boy walks in and says that Jason told him to call me a shithead. Of course, he doesn't know what he is saying. He just said it because the middle school kid told him to say it. The mother is absolutely horrified. She grabs him. I tell her that he does not understand what he's saying. I tell her to relax as I exit as gracefully as I can under the circumstances. (ti-8.21.97)

Children can learn a second language in many contexts. "The ability to do so depends on the structure of the classroom settings, the kind of language used in them, and the characteristics of the individual learners" (Fillmore, 1991, p. 64). A cognitive

structure in the brain specific to language provides children with an internal mechanism that accounts for their ability to learn the target language without attending to the formal properties of language (Bley-Vroman, 1989; Chomsky, 1965, 1975). Tsuneo's refusal to speak English, as well as his lack of contact with other children, only impedes the acculturation process for him.

Clothing. Tsuneo's clothes are not the trend-setting fashions Marika puts together, but his apparel is in style with what the other boys his age wear. He like jeans, T-shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants, loose jackets, and athletic shoes. His wardrobe is predominantly dark blue, navy, gray, and white. Although he does not wear the baggy style that some boys in the intermediate grades have adopted, Tsuneo prefers comfortable clothing that does not fit tightly. His large sweatpants and jeans appear to have been purchased with growth in mind. Tsuneo's sister explains that *kaigaishijo* prefer American clothing and do not want to wear anything with a Japanese label in it. While she can wear anything, including hair streaked with blue or purple dye, to express her individuality in America, Marika says that she and her sister and brother will have to curtail their flair for fashion when they return to school in Japan. She notes that her family tends to select comfortable clothing and that they will miss the variety and affordable prices American department stores offer.

Japanese elementary schools usually do not require uniforms with the exception of identical backpacks. Sometimes students in the primary grades wear colored caps to differentiate classes. At both the junior high and high school levels, however, strict dress and behavior codes are enforced:

Rules prescribe the uniform clothing that should be worn, sometimes down to the color of underwear, the hairstyles that are acceptable, the kinds of leisure activities that students are supposed to avoid during nonschool hours, the times they should be home at night, and so on. (Benjamin, 1997, p. 217)

In America, one way that students express their individuality is through their clothing choices. School uniforms in Japan curb individualism and creativity to foster identity with a social role through conformity (Benjamin, 1997). Tsuneo and his sisters express their identification with the American cultural mainstream through their clothing. Marika, if assessed only by her clothing, is a different person each day and takes advantage of the opportunity of individual expression through fashion. “It has been suggested that postmodern values include novelty, rapid change, individual enjoyment and consumer choice. Under postmodern conditions, there is the exhilarating experience of ever-new needs rather than the satisfaction of the still-existing ones” (Sarup, 1996, p.128). Tsuneo’s family, judged only by their clothing, is postmodern and fully acculturated.

Artistic endeavors. Tsuneo’s drawings attest to his acute visual perception. As early as third grade, he could draw better than any other student in his class. When the principal accompanied the three *kaigaishijo* in his third grade class to the fire station, she was amazed at the detailed drawings of fire engines that Tsuneo produced from memory when he returned to the school building. The ESL teacher marveled at the little boy’s ability to instantaneously memorize the numerical order of the 20 buses lined up outside the school as well as his ability to draw them accurately. The ESL teacher could toss

down the pieces of the most difficult puzzles available for students at the intermediate school and watch Tsuneo put them back together every time.

As a fifth grader Tsuneo is undoubtedly the most profoundly talented visual artist in the intermediate school. His portfolio includes detailed contour drawings of people, animals, and various vehicles. In a fall journal entry, Tsuneo wrote the following comments:

Things I like are drawing, Super Nintendo, sushi, ferret, and soccer. Things I don't like are journals, homework, having hard time with English, reading books, and mushrooms. (tsj-10.23.97)

Tsuneo's fourth-grade teacher believes that the boy understands much more than his teachers give him credit for knowing. He has the ability to write thoughts he would never articulate in public, but he does not enjoy writing, at least in English. When Tsuneo is unable to meet self-imposed standards, he becomes frustrated. He prefers drawing above all other pursuits:

That's exactly it! Draw a picture. He will draw anything! But, if he had to write a caption to go with it, he'd get upset. He'd throw a little temper tantrum! He would throw things across the classroom. He spent time out in another classroom once for that last year. I wouldn't let him take anything to draw with. I told him he had to take a book to read and gave him a second-grade level book. He was very angry about it. He cared only about art. (ti-12.30.97)

Tsuneo's fifth-grade ESL teacher describes the meticulous manner in which the boy constructs his vocabulary books. He insists that the paper is cut to precisely fit seven

spiral rings spaced about half an inch apart across the top. He writes each new word with a fine-tip marker, using the middle spiral ring to gauge the spacing of letters. If he is writing a definition on the reverse side of the paper in pencil and cannot fit all the words on a line, he erases and repeats the exercise until he accomplishes his self-imposed goal. His rule is that he cannot place a word of the definition alone on a line. His stringent attention to detail does not transfer to other aspects of his studies. He does not care that his backpack is totally disorganized and he can never find his homework papers.

Cognitive scientists, including Gardner (1985) and Sylwester (1995), have shown that children learn in a variety of ways through different styles, modalities, and multiple intelligences. “Verbalizing and writing out ideas are only one way of representing thinking, and often this is a thin, linear veneer of students’ thinking about content” (Hyerle, 1996, p.15). Visual integration and holistic representation of thoughts provide bridges to new understandings about learning (Hyerle, 1996; Sylwester, 1995). Tsuneo demonstrates extraordinary visual acuity and perceptual skill for a 12-year-old child. He uses art to demonstrate his knowledge of his environment when use of his second language, English, seems arduous. Drawing provides Tsuneo a method for making sense of his world. Art is the medium of meaning and significance for him that aids him in adjusting and adapting to the situation in which he finds himself. Individuals like Tsuneo who are gifted with extraordinary spatial abilities “have more insight into and have less fear of their own impulses, are less tense and less prone to inferiority feelings, and seem more able to use the environment effectively for the satisfaction of their needs” (Lovell, 1971, p. 40) unless, of course, they are placed in an environment over which they have no

control. Despite a portfolio replete with all sorts of contour drawings, including detailed ones of automobiles and airplanes, Tsuneo never says he wants to be an artist. In his journal, the boy writes that he wants to learn to drive a car and fly an airplane (tsj-10.30.97).

Maturation. It is impossible to separate genetic factors from environmental influences. Some research attempts, nonetheless, to distinguish between development due mainly to specific experiences and development that is not necessarily related to environment (Ausubel, 1966; Lovell, 1971). Vygotsky's (1962) research offers a view on the direct relationship between language and thought that contrasts with Piaget's (1963). Piaget proposes that language contributes little to cognition. "It is fair to say that, since the 1970s, evidence and opinion has generally supported the Vygotskian position concerning the importance of language for the development of thought" (Bancroft, 1995, p. 132). Recent research supports the view that "language learning can make a direct contribution to the formation of conceptual hierarchies and that this contribution is made at an earlier age than that previously supposed" (Bancroft, 1995, p. 133). Language within the social and cultural contexts in which it occurs and is used seems related to "the development of children's understanding of concepts and their ability to reason about them" (Bancroft, 1995, p. 143). Marika indicates that her brother was speaking Japanese and walking at the age of two when her family returned to Japan after their first sojourn. She remembers that Tsuneo's early schooling in Japan was uneventful.

As an ESL student in an American school, Tsuneo, by all accounts, has resisted opportunities to speak and practice writing English. His teachers believe that Tsuneo has

experienced stress within the intermediate school setting due, in part, to his lack of English language skills. Tsuneo has been exempt from annual standardized achievement testing during his sojourn in the United States. The school testing committee, consisting of an administrator and several teachers, decided that Tsuneo's lack of English skills made it impossible for him to take the Iowa Test of Basic Skills even under nonstandard conditions that would allow the teacher to read the test to him. His cumulative records at the intermediate school indicated that he has made satisfactory progress in conduct but that some of his work habits need to improve. In all areas related to reading and language arts, Tsuneo has received ESL assistance since second grade. Tsuneo's performance, with instructional modifications in each of the other core subject areas, merited cumulative grades of A or B at the intermediate grade levels; yet, his teachers consistently reported that the boy's performance does not match his potential. In an assessment used as an initial screening device for students experiencing learning difficulties, his fifth-grade teacher indicated that Tsuneo demonstrates poor peer interactions, is withdrawn and shy, and becomes frustrated easily. Marika described her brother as follows:

[Tsuneo] is like a young boy in his own world. I think he has his own ideas like my dad. He kind of wants it his way, but sometimes he'll, like, come in my room and say he's bored. I don't know. He's in a world of his own. Like my dad, he doesn't share a lot. That makes me angry at my dad. My mom and I get along a lot better. My brother holds a lot in. He just can't express it. My dad is his model. That's why. He holds a lot in, too. I'm kind of upset about that. One

point I don't like about my dad is, well, he's an awesome person, but I don't think he's talkative enough. We really have never had a conversation as deep as this one. I don't know anything about his feelings and I've been with him all 16 years and still don't! I think Japanese people hold in more. They hold it in a lot more than people do here. That was a part of the stuff I had to get over. I think guys, I don't know if American guys do or not, but Japanese guys, especially old people like my dad, have something that, it might sound weird, something, like spiritual that they don't, like, have to say it in words to understand each other.

[Tsuneo] and my dad understand each other. (esi-11.7.98)

Tsuneo's behaviors appear to be more closely related to his lack of social skills and an introverted personality rather than to maturational deficits or insufficient cognitive ability. Fillmore (1991) asserts that children who are sociable and have communicative needs generally learn the target language accurately and quickly. "The more sociable the child, the greater the time spent interacting with peers" (Fillmore, 1991, p. 50). Second-language learners who experience difficulty with English are usually children who are "shy, reclusive, laconic, or socially inept" (Fillmore, 1991, p. 50).

Tsuneo has demonstrated through his written English that he has figured out most of the cognitive processes that result in the acquisition of a second language. He has obviously accomplished this feat through internalizing and synthesizing what he has observed in classroom situations and with the one-on-one assistance through ESL instruction. As Tsuneo's grades and products indicate, he has acquired the skills necessary to comprehend written language without social interaction with his peers. He

has attained the maturational and cognitive milestones where language-specific mechanisms come into play.

Schools teach in a linear, sequential fashion. Students who learn that way and do what is expected of them are perceived by their teachers to be bright, cooperative, and mature. Unfortunately, those like Tsuneo, who tend to be uniquely gifted often frustrate their teachers and themselves. Tsuneo's spatial intelligence, demonstrated through his ability to produce drawings advanced for his age, his agility in working puzzles, his retention of knowledge from maps, and his interest in anything visual points to superior potential in this area (Armstrong, 1994). At the intermediate school, he has not had opportunities to interact with students who are capable of doing what he can do. As a consequence of his basic personality, apparently, not maturational deficits, he has had to settle for relative isolation and has not acculturated to the same extent as some of the other *kaigaishijo*.

Educational expectations. Tsuneo's teachers frequently report that he is not on task. Although he does not disturb the class, he looks out the door or gazes blankly into the center of the classroom. Apparently, Tsuneo daydreams more than his peers, which appears to be characteristic of spatially-oriented people (Armstrong, 1994). When he realizes that everyone is opening a book for an assignment, he pulls out a workbook and leans over to another student's desk to check the page number.

At the end of September, Tsuneo's father wrote a letter addressed to his son's fifth-grade classroom teacher and the ESL teacher. He inquired about his son's language assignments. He indicated that Tsuneo wants to do all the regular class assignments,

including reading and language arts. Both father and son, however, seemed uncertain about the classroom teacher's requirements. Both teachers encouraged Tsuneo to try the homework assignments. They felt that any language assignments Tsuneo completed would not only reinforce what had been taught in class but would also increase his vocabulary, writing skills, and reading fluency.

Tsuneo's interest in meeting educational expectations in fifth grade demonstrated some progress on the continuum toward complete acculturation. Until fifth grade, he had shown little interest in or understanding of teachers' requirements and expectations.

A few days after the father's letter had arrived, the ESL teacher indicated that she had given Tsuneo several choices of books to check out from the media center. He told the teacher that he had never heard the story of Mary Poppins but thought it sounded interesting. It was the only chapter book (divided into chapters without illustrations) among his choices, a fact that did not deter Tsuneo from wanting to read it. The ESL teacher told me that they had been taking 15 minutes a day to read from the book and that Tsuneo seemed to be comprehending the story. "I don't think he'd ask questions, though. He never has, so I try to guess the times he might be confused," she explained. Once again, Tsuneo protested about having to write in his journal. He took his ESL teacher's advice, however, and wrote about the new book he was reading:

I think fun to have magical power like Mary Poppins. She can fly everywhere. If I can fly, I like to go Antarctica because I want to see polar bears and penguins. I liked go ice fishing but by myself. I want stay one week. And back to here by magical flying. (tsj-10.2.97)

The fact that Tsuneo, a spatially-intelligent student who derives more meaning from pictures than words on a page, selected a book without illustrations demonstrates that he had begun to understand expectations for a student in fifth grade. He had also decided to attempt to meet those expectations by reading a grade-level selection. He may also have thought that a book that has something to do with flight could be intriguing. At any rate, it piqued his interest enough that he persevered and read the entire book, much to the delight of his classroom teacher and the ESL teacher.

The ESL teacher has frequently noted that Tsuneo gives her the impression that he does not like to write in his journal. Consequently, she decided not to make an issue of journal writing. When the boy has chosen to write in his journal, however, his work has been thoughtful and his printing has been legible and precise:

My good experience is moving to United States because United States' school is easier than Japan. I was excited about coming United States. We moved directly here. I started school first grade. I didn't have ESL until second grades. I have been to summer school every year. Japanese school is harder and I go on Saturdays. I spend more time doing homework for Japanese school. It takes one and half hour every night. American homework takes 30 minutes. My family is thinking about moving back to Japan, but I want stay here. (tsj-10.10.97)

When Tsuneo wrote that he wanted to stay in the United States, the ESL teacher felt that she was beginning to make some progress with him. At the end of October, his classroom teacher reported that she had noticed that Tsuneo was paying more attention to what was happening in the classroom and was even enthusiastic according to the method

whereby the material was taught. She said he lost interest quickly when her student teacher employs didactic teaching methods. When the regular classroom teacher, however, led students in a social studies game of Southeast region jeopardy, Tsuneo enthusiastically participated and proved that he is more proficient at recalling facts and identifying states and capitals than students who have lived in this country all their lives. In his fifth-grade class, a group in which gifted students are clustered, only one American student and Tsuneo made perfect scores on the states and capitals test, attesting to Tsuneo's ability as a spatial learner with a good memory and his ability vis-a-vis American peers.

Unfortunately, in today's schools the idea of presenting information to students through visual as well as auditory modes sometimes translates into simply writing on the board, a practice that is linguistic in nature. Spatial intelligence responds to *pictures*, either the images in one's mind or the images in the external world: photos, slides, movies, drawings, graphic symbols, ideographic languages, and so forth (Armstrong, 1994, p. 72).

On the day after a November holiday, Tsuneo actually appeared to be eager to return to school. More cooperative than usual, he made the following entry in his journal:

Yesterday, November 11, 1997, was Veteran's Day. I stayed home with my whole family. It was boring, because nothing to do. I played Super Nintendo for one hour then boring again. Then work homework for this and Japanese school. I had more homework for this school than Japanese homework then boring. It was very quiet day. (tsj-11.12.97)

By the middle of November, Tsuneo's classroom teacher noticed that the boy was stacking his books neatly in one side of his desk and leaving space on the other side for papers and pencils. She said she was pleased with this improvement in his organizational skills. She did not indicate if she thought the organizational skills taught in the ESL classroom had carried over into the regular classroom. Tsuneo had obviously interpreted what he had learned from the ESL teacher as an expectation for his regular classroom.

On Tsuneo's last day at the intermediate school in December, his fourth-grade teacher made an effort to locate him and wish him well. She gave the following account:

When I walked in [the ESL classroom], I said to him that it was his last day. He looked at me and simply said, "Yes." I said, "Are you excited?" He said, "No." He was smiling. "Well, it's your last day," I said. "Do I get a hug?" He looked at me and shook his head. Then, he got up and I got a huge hug. It's the first one I've ever received from him! It brought tears to my eyes. I thanked him. That was it. He turned around and went back to work. When I had him last year, he would only look at me. That was about all I got. I thought it was great when I finally got 'high fives' from him. He's become more open, more Americanized.
(ti-12.30.97)

This particular teacher is a nurturing person who systematically hugs all of her students as a sign of affirmation and affection. Maki, who had also been in this teacher's classroom but has never attended school in Japan, hugs her American teachers and expects hugs in return. Tsuneo, who had attended kindergarten and first grade in Japan, is less acculturated to American ways than Maki. Public display of affection is not a

practice Tsuneo was accustomed to engaging in or seeing in Japan (ti-8.21.97). Finally, in fifth grade when he began to understand cultural and educational expectations in an American school, he began to shed his Japanese cultural inhibition or aversion to bodily contact with someone outside of his home and briefly embraced his fourth-grade teacher. Certainly, this act indicated that he was making acculturative progress. Finally, just as Tsuneo was beginning to understand educational expectations and to feel more comfortable in the intermediate school, his family decided to return to Japan.

A receptive attitude. Classroom teachers and ESL teachers agree that the attitudes of *kaigaishijo* impact their experiences in America. Attitudes are influenced by the students' understanding of the culture. Implicit or explicit, the culture of the school is communicated through the assumptions and words of students and faculty (Clayton, 1996). In a school where there is little diversity, *kaigaishijo*, or other cross-cultural students, for that matter, may easily feel alone and alienated. Yoko, initially exhilarated when she arrived, experienced a brief period of depression when she was unable to understand enough English to meet classroom expectations. Supportive parents and teachers helped her over hurdles. Tsuneo's older sister, an extrovert who explained that she had been a stellar student in Japan, experienced three months of depression when she returned to the United States. Of her own volition and without the help of her parents, she pulled herself out of the slump and decided to make the most of her opportunities. Especially when he was unable to understand, Tsuneo said that the only thing he knew to do was to draw pictures (ti-7.10.97). He received no assistance from his parents. Perhaps he was unable to explain his feelings to his parents. Perhaps Tsuneo was unable to

understand them himself. He retreated into his own world, the world of art, where he felt competent.

Tsuneo's teacher from fourth grade, the one who has taught three of the four participants in this study, was unable to understand why Tsuneo maintained a distant relationship with her. He neither responded to nor accepted her overtures of kindness. She had no understanding of his cultural predisposition. Instead of capitalizing on his spatial ability, she even punished him on an occasion by taking away his art materials. She blamed Tsuneo's inability to acculturate more on his parents and his lack of initiative than on her teaching style or deficient knowledge about his culture:

I think if [acculturation] is something the parents want for the children, if, for example, they want their children to enjoy this experience, knowing it's for a brief time, the children will succeed. [Tsuneo's] parents didn't want that for him. I don't know why they brought him over here to be honest with you. I think he should have stayed in Japan with his grandparents! [Yoko's] parents are still trying to feel their way through it, but they're wanting her to fit in. So far as the English language part of it, if the parents are showing them that it's okay, then they're feeling that confidence, too. [*Kaigaishijo*] respect their parents so much more in a different way from American students. I don't know if it's wanting to learn more about American culture or wanting to fit in with your peers or both. [Tsuneo] did not care. He never cared if you liked him or not. That wasn't what he was about at all! It didn't matter! He didn't acculturate. He didn't begin to live up to his potential! (ti-12.30.97)

Children emulate their parents. Marika believes that Tsuneo is much like his father in temperament. Tsuneo's teachers characterize both father and son as persons who lack appropriate interpersonal skills. Tsuneo's father's attitude toward many of the intermediate school teachers was somewhat condescending. His attitude was certainly not interpreted as friendly or receptive. Tsuneo's mother did not think her neighbors liked their family. Certainly, parents' negative feelings impact their children. Tsuneo steadily withdrew during fourth grade and isolated himself from the culture of school.

Tsuneo's fifth-grade teacher, with twice as many years of experience as the boy's teacher in fourth grade, knew of his difficulties in acculturating. With a student teacher in her classroom, she had more time to individualize and to personalize instruction for Tsuneo. She never attempted to touch or hug him, but she praised him for any progress she noted. She may not have realized that Tsuneo's spatial ability accounted for his social studies success in learning the states and capitals, but her acknowledgment of his success, especially as a student who is not a native of this culture, affirmed, perhaps for the first time, the boy's integrity as a student.

Tsuneo's relationship with Maki improved during fifth grade. Although she did not translate for him, as she had been encouraged to do in fourth grade, she did not shun him. During lunch she occasionally sat across from him. She included him in her conversations with her American friends. Her family and his family took turns in a car pool to and from Japanese Saturday school. Tsuneo's body language at the intermediate school around Maki and American students indicated that he was more relaxed than he had previously been. Teachers and administrators noted in December that Tsuneo and

Maki walked together from their school bus to their classroom in the mornings. Instead of hanging his head as he had done in the past, Tsuneo looked up at his peers and walked more confidently through the halls. His journal attested to the fact that he was more receptive to the host culture than perhaps he had been in fourth grade:

When it is Christmas day I'm moving back to Japan. I wish we were moving on different day because no Christmas party on 24th. We will be in Los [Angeles] for 3 days before we go to Japan. I will miss dad because he will stay by himself. Maybe in 4 years we will come back to United States. I hope we do come back. Japanese houses are small, but my dad's house is very big. (tsj-12.18.97)

Tsuneo probably would express no interest in returning if he had found nothing agreeable about America. Interestingly, he notes that he will miss his dad. Obviously, the bond between them is strong. This type of relationship, though not unusual by Western standards, is more unusual by Japanese standards where a close relationship fostered by dependency exists between mother and son (Hendry, 1996; Iwao, 1993). By December Tsuneo was comparing the two cultures and finding American things, such as his father's large house, that he would miss in Japan.

Personality. Teachers consistently described Tsuneo as quiet, shy, withdrawn, a loner, and a student who never volunteered. He would not look at them and he never asked questions. Only in the final weeks of his sojourn did he begin to make eye contact with his teachers, to raise his hand in class, to smile, or to talk with a peer. It was not until the middle of November that the ESL teacher said Tsuneo would express his opinions, although he never initiated conversation. When she needed detailed answers to

ascertain his comprehension level, the ESL teacher indicated that it took much probing on her part. All of the teachers at the intermediate school agreed that Tsuneo is not a verbal child and that his introverted personality will not change in Japan. Tsuneo's sister offered her personal theory about personality:

I think how fast you learn to speak English depends on your personality. If you're like introverted, it might take you a long time. For me, fortunately, I love to 'hang out' and socialize and was more outgoing, so I learned quickly.

(esi-7.10.97)

Tsuneo's personality is complex. Not only is he introverted and shy, but he is also spatially intelligent and demonstrates intrapersonal strengths. He performs better when he is left alone to study or to draw. Marika described her brother as a boy in his own world, one who marches to the beat of a different drummer. Although he is not a verbal child, he expresses how he feels in his journal entries. Armstrong (1994) believes that students with strongly developed intrapersonal skills find the classroom atmosphere somewhat claustrophobic. If teachers understand students with intrapersonal needs, they will "build in frequent opportunities during the day for students to experience themselves as autonomous beings with unique life histories and a sense of deep individuality" (Armstrong, 1994, p. 82).

Unfortunately, Tsuneo and other gifted students sometimes "encounter hostility from teachers and age peers and have no opportunity to interact with intellectual, academic, or artistic peers" (Feldhusen, 1985, p. 22). When one's self-concept faces obstacles, as in Tsuneo's case, withdrawal provides protection. Instead of being receptive

toward the host culture, Tsuneo steadily withdrew and became more introverted until his final semester at the intermediate school. By nature, neither as sociable nor as out-going as other *kaigaishijo* in this study, Tsuneo's personality impeded his acculturation process.

Consistent with his personality, his travel experiences, his spatial ability, and his intrapersonal strengths, Tsuneo has already formulated a goal for his life:

If I could be famous, it would be because I'm pilot. When I grow up, I want to be pilot because I like airplanes. I think I do not want to get married. If I get married, I think I would want [zero] kids. Boys? 0. Girls? 0. Because pilot travel too much. (tsj-11.12.97)

Length of residency. Tsuneo has lived in the United States on his second sojourn for three years and eight months. Twenty-two months of that time has been spent in grades three through five at the intermediate school level. He turned 10 in third grade and celebrated his twelfth birthday in December during fifth grade, making him slightly older than the average student in his grade level. On the continuum toward full acculturation, despite his age and length of residency, Tsuneo is not as far along as Yoko, the sociable *kaigaishijo* who has resided in the United States slightly more than a year. Length of residency in Tsuneo's case has had little impact on the acculturation process.

Tsuneo balked, according to the ESL teacher, when she asked him to write in his journal on his final day at the intermediate school. He consented to write a few lines:

Today is my last day and makes me feel sad. I made nutcracker filled with candy for mom and dad. I got a present from [ESL teacher]. One is t-shirt and two haven't opened yet; I will open them in home (that Japanese way to get gifts). I

gave to [ESL teacher] address in Japan to write letter. I write to [ESL teacher] letters too. I lived America two years and half and I miss America. (tsj-12.19.97)

Tsuneo's length of residency as listed in the last line is inaccurate for the total amount of time he has resided in the United States. It is correct for the amount of time he has spent at the intermediate school. More important is the fact that he will miss America. That fact alone indicates that Tsuneo was beginning to acculturate.

Family value of education. Japanese consider education to be instrumental in socialization and directly related to quality of life (Bernstein, 1996; Christopher, 1983; Goodman, 1993). Traditionally, the mother has taken seriously her role as the parent responsible for the children's education (Benjamin, 1997; Iwao, 1993; White, 1988).

The educational difficulties that Tsuneo and one of his sisters have experienced in the United States weighed heavily on the family's decision to return to Japan. According to a local newspaper account in which Tsuneo's parents were interviewed, they stated that their children's struggles with the culture and with English, clinched the family's decision to return to Japan (Szabo, 1997). The eldest child, the most extroverted of the three, was the only one in Tsuneo's family to completely acculturate. By Marika's own admission, her extroverted personality, not the family's emphasis, or lack thereof, on the value of education nor her mother's role, was responsible for her acculturation. Tsuneo, his mother, and his two sisters returned to Japan on December 25, 1997.

Comfortable in her new apartment and delighted that her children are doing well in their respective Japanese schools, Tsuneo's mother wrote the following letter:

Thank you for the card you sent us to our new address. It was the first letter we received since we moved. [Tsuneo] and [Haruko] started to go to school from Jan. 8th. [Marika] passed the test and started to go to international high school from Jan. 23rd. [Tsuneo's] elementary school has about 500 student from 1st through 6th grade. It is smaller size than average Japanese school.

[Tsuneo] leaves for school about 8:00 and comes home about 4:00 every day. Subjects are flexible each day. He takes 4 Japanese language class, 5 math, 3 social studies, 2 science, 3 gym, 2 music, 2 living and some original class programs. His Japanese is quite good. So right now, he doesn't have any problem in school. He spent after school mostly at home when he was in the States. Now he plays with some friends. He goes everywhere for himself. At the beginning, I waited for him coming home anxiously. But he comes back shortly after 5:00. So I am not nervous about it these days.

Our apartment is on the top of the hill. We can see snow capped high mountains far away. I miss large spacious house in America but I have to get used to the small rooms here. [Marika] and [Haruko] are doing well. They help me a lot.

[Marika] takes ten hours of English class a week. She is glad that teacher is American. They have a hard time to catch up science and social studies. Most of student in school are the student who stayed foreign countries for some years and foreign students. There are many people from South America live in this city. Their kids go to Japanese public schools. When I see them, I remember my

children were learning in American school. So I want to help them as much as I can like American people who helped us. (nl-2.2.98)

Although Tsuneo's mother is not the "education mama" who actively intervenes or directs her children's academic progress, she probably thinks that she is meeting Japanese cultural expectations by returning with her children to Japan before her husband's assignment in the United States ends. According to information Maki's mother provided, both families selected the areas of residence based upon access to international schools. Tsuneo's family's return to Japan could be interpreted as a sign that the family values education. My observations lead me to believe that it is more likely to suggest that material commodities are more important to them than education. Compared to other parents of *kaigaishijo*, Tsuneo's mother and father did not have as much education. Yet, their standard of living in the United States surpassed what they could have attained in Japan.

Reluctant to be interviewed or to share her personal feelings while she lived in the United States, Tsuneo's mother did not express her views on education. Her response, however, to simple American acts of kindness has resulted in letters from Japan that provide insights that she, like Tsuneo, can capably provide in writing:

The encyclopedia you sent has arrived at our home. It is very interesting. It has many beautiful pictures. Thank you very much. [Tsuneo] is doing very well in Japanese school. He has many friends to play with after school. He is often asked the question such as "What do you say in English?" by his friends. It is hard for him to make English sentences, but not hard to say simple words. It is

sad that some children who can speak English doesn't like to speak English after going back to Japan. In near future elementary school children will start to learn English from 4th grade. I think English becomes important language for Japanese people because we have to communicate with people over the world through computers or multi media.

Now [Tsuneo] is crazy about Pocket Monsters: which are [characters] of Game Boy. There are 151 monsters in the game. The player owns one monster first, then he collect all 151 monsters fighting with other monsters. He train the monster to get more fighting techniques. This game is most popular among all ages. He also likes to play Hyper Yoo Yoo. He practice some techniques every day.

Graduation day is one of the biggest event in Elementary school. 5th grade students are now practicing the farewell song to sing on graduation day. Next year, from April, [Tsuneo] becomes 6th grade. 6th grade students have to take care of younger students. They lead the group of children to go to school. They take part of class work such as taking care of plants, making newspaper, taking care of small animals, serving lunch, helping the clinic, whatever.

There are many differences between American and Japanese school. Both schools have good points. [Tsuneo] remembers the people in [your school]. He says he want to go to [your state] again. (I talked with him what to write in this letter.) Thank you very much again for the nice gift. (nl-3.26.98)

Tsuneo is apparently adjusting well to school life back in Japan. His mother is

not an educator and, therefore, is no more actively engaged in Tsuneo's daily school assignments than she was in the United States. She seems, however, to be interested in her son's general well-being. She realizes the value of English in a shrinking world and wishes that Tsuneo, who has had the benefit of American educational experiences, would engage more actively in conversation with his peers. Both mother and son are shy individuals whose strengths do not reside in verbal communication; rather, they demonstrate that they are more skilled in written expression.

Although Tsuneo's mother does not mention clothing, she writes about her son's fascination with Japanese novelties, indicative of the pronounced influence of consumer culture on this particular family. The American intermediate school discouraged toys within the academic setting and Tsuneo mentions only Super Nintendo in his journal. Clothing is obviously easier to observe as an indicator of acculturation within a school.

The mother's explanation of sixth grade appears to indicate that Tsuneo will not be promoted when the Japanese school year commences in April, 1998. One can only surmise that Tsuneo does not meet Japanese educational expectations for promotion after one semester in fifth grade in an American school and a few months in the same grade in Japan.

The fact that Tsuneo has friends is mentioned in this letter and the previous one, because his parents were always made aware of how odd teachers felt it was that their son had no friends in the intermediate school. His mother's account of her son's selection of toys, however, indicates that Tsuneo still spends time alone in individual pursuits consistent with his intrapersonal strengths. The mother's final paragraph, in which she

mentions that Tsuneo remembers the people at the intermediate school and wants to return to America, seems to confirm that he made a certain amount of progress toward acculturation. After withdrawing in fourth grade, in fifth grade Tsuneo was beginning the initial phases of functioning and participating that may have, in time, led to his adjustment within the school environment.

Conclusions

The stories of four *kaigaishijo* in an American school have been presented and analyzed on the basis of factors that affect social personality formation during the acculturation process (p. 58). The essential factors that provide useful insights into acculturation are (1) the mother's role in acculturation, (2) language acquisition, (3) clothing, (4) artistic endeavors, (5) maturation, (6) educational experiences, (7) a receptive attitude, (8) personality, (9) length of residency, and (10) family value of education.

The children's stories were presented on a continuum from the most completely acculturated of the four, Ken, to the least acculturated, Tsuneo. Maki, nearly as acculturated as Ken, distinguished herself through her understanding of and appreciation for Japanese culture as well as her desire and willingness to share aspects of it with her American peers. Yoko, the most recent of the four to enroll in the intermediate school, was not the least acculturated. She appeared to be further along on the continuum to complete acculturation than Tsuneo at the conclusion of the observation period.

Cultural differences impact the ways in which students communicate, interact, and learn and often become the source for misunderstanding within the educational setting

(Pai & Adler, 1997). For this reason, the remainder of this study focuses on the conclusions I reached regarding acculturation and the implications for education.

CHAPTER 5

From Acculturation to Cosmopolitanism

Given the complex nature of the process, the path to complete acculturation is not linear but winds and twists, vacillates back and forth, and is dependent upon numerous interacting variables. While acknowledging this fact as important to my analysis of the acculturation process for *kaigaishijo*, the profound effect of such flux and flow on the everyday lives of the children did not really mean anything to me until I entered their world and attempted to disentangle the complexity of their situation. I needed to understand what it must mean to be a Japanese child; what it must mean to confront a value system that emphasizes individuality each day at school and return home to one that emphasizes harmony and concession; what it must mean to try to figure out what it is one is supposed to do if one is unable to understand the language of the host country.

How unprepared I was for the task I had set for myself! How like me to take on such an overwhelming task! My own conceptions of Japanese children, constructed as they were through tangential experiences at school, my interactions with a Japanese intern teacher, and my readings of the literature were suddenly and radically challenged. The stereotypical response of “They’re Japanese! What do you expect?” proved unreliable if I could believe my eyes and trust what I was beginning to comprehend. This confrontation with my own doubts about my capabilities for the task and the complexity

of the process forced me to bring to the fore every skill I had ever learned or had been taught about habits of mind, research, and interpersonal communication skills. Those were not enough! I had to trust my experiences as a parent and my intuition about children. Could I actually apply emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995) to scholarly research? It was my salvation!

In this study I examined the process of acculturation among *kaigaishijo*, Japanese children attending school in the United States while their fathers are on temporary business assignments. Through a careful analysis of the process of acculturation, which, in my estimation, turns out to be a process of identity construction, I have earnestly attempted to demonstrate its complexity. The fact that it is not the same for each child makes it nearly impossible to “nail down” the discrete phases. Nine salient factors emerged, although there may be as many more that I was unable to examine due to time constraints.

The concepts in this study have evolved through my experiences that not only include formal research processes but also, and perhaps even more importantly, the invaluable insights I have gained through unexpected events, informal associations, and friendships with Japanese people. An understanding of *uchi* and *soto* relations helped to eliminate barriers to understanding. I will always be indebted to my Japanese friends for their willingness to share their lives with me for the purposes of this study and for the relationships we have forged. It must, however, be acknowledged that I am only an “outsider.” I have no “authentic” voice, because I am not a person of Japanese descent. I cannot even claim to speak with the authority of an anthropologist because my

background is in the arts and humanities. Nevertheless, my position as an educator, a feminist, and an advocate for children's rights has enabled me to examine this complex process and, at least, to contribute what I hope are valuable insights. Perhaps my rather naive perspective, unencumbered as it was by concepts of theoretical anthropology and psychology, enabled me to enter the world of the *kaigaishijo*.

Tsuneo, oldest of the four *kaigaishijo*, was finally beginning to acculturate when his family returned to Japan. In my view, much of the internal conflict that Tsuneo and Yoko experienced was due to feelings that they, as children, were unable to articulate. Tsuneo's outward manifestations of his inner turmoil surfaced when the boy became angry at his teacher for taking away his art materials or when he became frustrated by his inability to fit all the words onto a single line. I attribute Tsuneo's withdrawal into his own world of art as his unconscious response to a sense of alienation and even injustice as a result of his educational predicament and his involuntary status as a Japanese boy in an American school. Likewise, Yoko became exasperated when she was unable to make her teacher understand that she needed to "phone home." Yoko, always the optimist, employed divergent thinking and drew a picture to solve the problem. The whole process that *kaigaishijo* go through deals with feelings. It is not simply a cognitive experience. Acculturation is about perception, emotions, social interaction, and social personality. It is less about ideologies and more about interpersonal relationships. Therefore, a starting place not only for figuring out the complexities of the process but also for ensuring that the process of acculturation proceeds for *kaigaishijo*, appears to be understanding their experiences and their personalities.

My observations led me to believe that language, undeniably a part of acculturation, is not necessarily as important a part of the process as Clayton (1996) might lead us to believe. The four immigrant children Clayton (1996) studied insisted that language was the biggest barrier they had to overcome. "The primary challenge that these four cross-cultural students felt was that of learning English" (Clayton, 1996, p. 68). Although the acquisition of English undeniably facilitates the acculturation process, it is not absolutely imperative for sojourners to communicate through the target language. Yoko, for example, used pantomime and drawing to convey her thoughts, perceptions, and needs before she had acquired adequate second-language skills. When the cross-cultural students learned the target language, they were able to establish friendships that appeared to facilitate the acculturation process.

Minoura's (1979) findings indicated that maturational readiness is the primary determinant of cultural identity. As the example of Maki's younger brother, a child introduced to a second culture before he had met the maturational milestone of first-language acquisition, clearly illustrates, maturation is vital to the process of acculturation. Collier (1989), in fact, explains that older children of approximately intermediate school age (8 through 12) maintain a general cognitive advantage over younger children that indeed impacts acculturation. I disagree with Minoura that all other factors are negligible. For example, she postulated that personality, as manifested through observable behavior, is flexible enough through the age of 11, given that maturational milestones have been met, for Japanese children to easily switch their behaviors to American patterns. As a participant-observer, my observations led me to believe that the

personality, stable across cultures (Cummins & Swain, 1986), may not be flexible enough to enable the child to acculturate. Furthermore, the child's attitude toward the host culture, influenced by the family's general attitude, may affect the rate at which acculturation proceeds as Tsuneo's case so clearly demonstrates.

According to my definition and from the evidence collected, Ken and Maki became acculturated. Both *kaigaishijo* behaved as though they were comfortable in an American school environment, enjoyed success in their American academic work, and had attained a certain congruency between being Japanese and having to live temporarily in America. Ken knew that he was a Japanese boy. In fact, he wrote in his journal that he is Japanese. Ken demonstrated a Japanese sense of reserve until the occasion called for him to assert his individualism within an American third-grade classroom. Then, he acted like an American student. His hand was always among the first to be raised. His eyes met the teacher's gaze. Ken answered mental math questions confidently and easily. He wanted to be the first student to be recognized by the teacher.

Maki appeared to understand, perhaps more than Ken, what it means to be Japanese. Poised, well-mannered, accepted and liked by her American peers and teachers, Maki, in Japanese fashion, conformed to the expectations for any group to which she was assigned. Nevertheless, she asserted her individuality and assumed leadership responsibilities whenever the opportunity presented itself. Yet, Maki, because she was older and slightly more mature than Ken, seemed to understand more about her Japanese heritage and to appreciate her cultural background. She demonstrated that she was proud to be Japanese by her preference for Japanese cultural experiences and her

willingness to share her knowledge with her American peers. Hence, Maki, appeared slightly less acculturated than Ken, a Japanese boy who could have “passed” as an American student.

Yoko demonstrated that her desire to interact with her peers and teachers, in her efforts to make friends and to meet educational expectations, superseded her lack of facility with English. Her ability to make friends seemed directly attributable to her outgoing personality. Her initiation of interpersonal relationships with American peers and teachers offered numerous communication opportunities that may have reduced Yoko’s lack of confidence in speaking English and, in turn, significantly encouraged her to take moderate risks to communicate in other ways.

Considering all the variables, what accounts for the difference between the relatively uncomplicated way in which Yoko acculturated and Tsuneo’s path that fluctuated between his feelings of marginality and alienation? As I thought about the complexity of the phenomenon I was observing, I began to separate discrete aspects of the acculturative process from the total experience. I also looked for explanatory patterns or phases as the process proceeded.

Factors that Impact Acculturation

Emerging out of four children’s stories, I isolated nine common factors that were related to or impacted their progress in acculturation. The factors surfaced through the data collected in the interviews and observations as a result of my conceptual framework that focused on the family, the educational environment, and maturity. By sorting the data and comparing and contrasting one child’s experience to those of the others as

Factors that impact the acculturation process

| Of greatest importance | Of moderate importance | Of least importance |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Personality | Mother's role | Length of residency |
| A receptive attitude | Educational expectations | Language acquisition |
| | Family value of education | Clothing |
| | Artistic endeavors | |

Figure 5.1. Aspects of the acculturation process

individuals and as an aggregate, these nine factors appeared repeatedly to impact the process of acculturation. Elements of two of the three original concepts that organized my thinking, interviewing, and observations, that is, family and school, played significant to moderate functional roles in the acculturation process of these four children. All four children, according to information gleaned from their parents, teachers, and school records, had met appropriate maturational milestones; therefore, the concept of maturation did not impact in these cases. Specific elements from the familial and educational environments did, however. In addition, two factors directly pertaining to the individual children's social and psychological make-up rendered significant consequences in the acculturation process.

The nine common factors appear not to influence acculturation with equal weight. Some constitute a more salient role than others. Consequently, I have divided the nine common factors into three groups according to the degree of importance in the children's

path to acculturation: two factors display the greatest impact, four are of moderate importance, and three play a minor role in acculturation (see figure 5.1). The following discussion of each of the nine common factors provides evidence of their degree of salience to the acculturation process for these four children.

Length of residency. Although the longer a child resides in the host country with language acquisition being facilitated (Cummins, 1991), a comparison of residency patterns among the four children demonstrates that this factor has a minimal direct effect upon acculturation. While the length of residency appears to be a less salient factor in acculturation, the degree of exposure to the primary culture's educational environment may have a significant effect. The two more acculturated students, Maki and Ken, had lived in the United States for five and approximately six years respectively. With the exception of two weeks of school attendance in Tokyo, all of Maki's education had taken place in the United States. Likewise, Ken had attended school in Tokyo for approximately three weeks during a family vacation in 1996. With the exception of these two visits in Tokyo schools, their entire educational experience has been within the American system.

On the other hand, during this study, Tsuneo was experiencing his second sojourn to and more than six years of total residency in the United States. He had participated in American schooling for his entire second-, third-, and fourth-grade years and first semester of fifth grade. In between his two periods of foreign residency, he began school in Japan spending two significant years--kindergarten and first grade--learning through Japanese educational standards. Although the majority of his education has taken place

in the United States, he made little progress on the continuum toward acculturation until first semester of fifth grade.

If we contrasted Tsuneo with Maki and Ken, we might surmise that the lack of exposure to Japanese education assisted the latter two while the early exposure in the primary grades made the difference for the former. However, in comparison, Yoko, who had been schooled in Japan from kindergarten through most of third grade, demonstrated a fervent desire to adapt to her host culture. She was more acculturated than Tsuneo after only experiencing one semester in third grade and one semester in fourth grade.

Length of residency in the host culture itself, therefore, does not appear to be a salient factor in these children's acculturation. There does, however, seem to be a possible relationship between exposure to educational norms within the primary culture and acculturation. Indeed, the sample is small. A definitive conclusion is impossible here. Only two of the four children experienced education within their primary culture, with the exception of Japanese Saturday school, and both have displayed different levels of acculturation. The effect may be significant for some children and mild for others. As a result of the ambiguity here, it would appear that other factors may be more important in a child becoming acculturated.

Language acquisition. A primary question that has persisted throughout the study has been is the lack of fluency in the English language one of the most alienating experiences for *kaigaishijo* and, as a result, a major obstacle to acculturation? From extant research, we know that a relationship exists between exposure to and use of the target language (Cummins & Swain, 1989). In addition, as Clayton (1996) has

determined, language acquisition is most important for immigrants for whom assimilation is the goal. On the other hand, sojourners--those who are living in another culture on a temporary basis--must only attain a comfortable congruency between their native culture and the host culture. The children in this study were not voluntary immigrants and their goal certainly was not assimilation. However, surviving and succeeding within the school environment as well as the general social environment challenged them to find ways to communicate. Verbal fluency in English is only one possible medium. I found that verbal facility in the target language is of less importance in the process of acculturation than other variables. However, I also found that these students discovered a variety of methods by which to communicate.

Yoko joined the dance club at the beginning of fourth grade, her second semester in the United States. The club provided her with a social situation in which she could be with other children. Although she could not understand the instructor's English, Yoko imitated the movements of the teacher and other students, thus fitting in, learning, and enjoying the activity. She performed capably, certainly as well as most of the other dancers, at both the annual ice cream social and career day events, evidencing the fact that her lack of verbal facility did not handicap or impede her participation. She was accepted as a viable member of the dance group, an ordinary member who performed all of the routines in both the line and circle dances. As an outgoing and resourceful child, Yoko managed to make herself understood when she needed to communicate even in tense or frustrating situations. For example, the first time she needed permission to telephone her mother, she communicated her exigency through drawing a picture. She

communicated with her peers via pantomime, giggling, and eventually through physically touching the hands and hair of an American classmate. The American girl warmly responded, smiling and repeating the English words for the body parts Yoko touched. The two were observed holding hands as they walked to the buses one afternoon.

On the other hand, Tsuneo, who was not verbally fluent in English, certainly communicated his aspirations and interests through his drawings and managed to record his weekend activities in his journal with a modicum of written facility. He did not, however, seem to possess the same facility with the target language when pressed to speak. His reticence appears to have been related more to other factors than comprehension of English. Tsuneo never participated in cooperative learning groups in any of his intermediate school experiences. He did join classmates to play kickball and soccer during school recess. One teacher expressed her amazement at Tsuneo's engagement in athletic activities compared to his reluctance to participate in class. She noted, however, that Tsuneo's responses, directions, and commands on the athletic field consisted of only a word or two.

These findings have led me to question how critical language is to a child's progress toward acculturation or, more accurately, what forms of communication permit them to find their way through the cultural maze of the host society. Although it may be important or even essential to the process of assimilation (Clayton, 1996), verbal fluency in the target language does not appear to be a primary condition for the process of acculturation to proceed.

Clothing. Despite the paucity of studies designed explicitly to examine that what a child wears to school may be an indicator of how far along s/he is on the continuum toward acculturation, sufficient data from my observations and field notes enabled me to come to a specific conclusion. What *kaigaishijo* wear to school is insignificant as an aspect that accelerates or impedes the process of acculturation, but may be an outward sign that children are trying to fit into the secondary culture. The American students never made derogatory comments about any of Yoko's Japanese clothes--at least that I heard or were reported to me by teachers. They never judged her on the basis of her Sanrio blouses or Japanese knee socks. The students apparently liked Yoko because of her personality and not because of her clothes. She, however, appeared to change her clothing taste, sporting "American" styles and labels following the Christmas break in fourth grade, her second year at the school. In this way, Yoko appears to have been trying to fit in, to appear more like the classmates she wanted as friends.

Clothing is a relatively innocuous difference between people. Since the Japanese students come from a culture that still employs, at least for ceremonial functions, costumes, American students were, in fact, curious about the Japanese traditional clothing. Maki, with her mother's help, brought enough *yukata* to school to outfit all of her classmates in fourth grade. The American students were fascinated by the costumes, asking questions and wearing the garb as they learned to perform several Japanese festival dances. The American students do not seem to be affected one way or the other in terms of the modern clothing that the Japanese children wear. *Kiagaishijo*, however, appear to adopt Western clothing to eliminate as much of their difference as possible.

Tsuneo's older sister, a student at the neighboring high school, expressed her individuality through avant-garde clothing that was neither Japanese nor American. Students did not discriminate against her because of her individual taste in clothing; rather, they accepted it as an individual's right of expression. Her expression of individuality, however, may indicate a higher degree of acculturation than was true of the younger children. To be Japanese is to accept conformity. To be American is to express individuality. Just as clothing choices can be used to express an understanding of popular culture, so can they be used to examine change. In the context of this study, however, clothing preferences seemed among the least salient of the nine factors examined and merely appears to demonstrate that young children want to fit into their social environment. If it were not for their physical differences, none of the four could have been culled from their classes as being Japanese based on their clothing.

Mother's role. As noted previously, Japanese mothers usually assume all responsibilities related to the child's personal and educational needs. So dedicated is the mother to her child's education that she has often been called an "education mama" as she strives to guide her child through the education maze (Simons, 1987; Hendry, 1987). The notion of the dedicated mother was exemplified by Ken's and Maki's mothers, both of whom had university educations. Yoko's mother's lack of English skills, coupled with the responsibilities entailed in rearing four daughters, precluded an interview with me. Nevertheless, Yoko's mother, even without higher education and with limited skills in English, demonstrated her acceptance of her normative role through helping her daughter in every way a Japanese mother could be expected to do. She brought Yoko's forgotten

assignments, musical instruments, props for the “student of the week” program to school, and purchased special treats for Yoko’s classmates. Reportedly, she assisted Yoko with homework assignments. Both parents seemed to be engaged in their child’s education since they appeared at school for extracurricular activities in which Yoko was engaged.

Tsuneo’s mother, on the other hand, lacked the same involvement in her son’s education. In the initial stages of my investigation, I believed this inattention to account for his inability to acculturate at the same rate as the other *kaigaishijo*. His sister’s revelations, however, changed my mind. Their mother, it appears, had never been involved in the educational experiences of her children regardless of where they had lived. Marika explained that Tsuneo had always been the same kind of shy, introverted individual in Japan and in the family’s home as he was in the intermediate school. Marika, on the other hand, had been a competent, outgoing student in Japan who decided that she could excel academically and socially in America if she put her mind to it. Her acculturation, by her own admission, was a direct result of her extroverted personality and had no relation to anything her mother had or had not done to assist her.

The mother’s role is deemed important in a Japanese child’s education and is usually thought to ensure the Japanese child’s educational success (Simons, 1987; White, 1988). In American, however, the Japanese mother’s understanding of her role appears to be of only moderate importance in the process of acculturation. Although her involvement may support and encourage the educational endeavors and scholastic achievement of the child, it appears that children can decide to take personal responsibility for fruitful adaptation themselves. As we will see below, the family’s

attitude toward education, or possibly more concretely toward American education, may be a more direct influence on a child's acculturation.

Educational expectations. If the cross-cultural child understands educational expectations, then s/he would be expected to adjust more easily to school. If the child, however, does not comprehend English, then s/he likely will have a more difficult time understanding expectations. From my observations, understanding educational expectations and comprehending English appear to be related. Understanding educational expectations should enable the child to feel more comfortable in the host culture. Nonetheless, it appeared that understanding educational expectations only moderately impacts the acculturation process for *kaigaishijo*. Yoko, for instance, desperately wanted to understand and meet educational expectations and attempted assignments that were far too difficult for her level of expertise in English. Did that lack of understanding impede the acculturation process? Interestingly, the process of acculturation proceeded. Yoko's willingness to persevere and to surmount obstacles and her ingenuity provided the means around stumbling blocks. Although she initially followed the Japanese educational protocol of waiting until the teacher had concluded the lesson before she asked for assistance, Yoko was not hesitant to use any means she could to try to make the teacher understand her queries. She seemed neither shy nor intimidated by her lack of understanding educational expectations.

Tsuneo, in contrast, appeared to understand some expectations but chose to become engaged only in activities that required use of his excellent spatial skills, such as social studies map games and geography assignments. These fifth-grade activities were

not only appealing to him and ones in which he was sure to excel but also possibly had positive impact upon his acculturation. With encouragement, he usually followed directions in his journal writing. On occasion, however, he creatively interpreted his assignments. For instance, when the ESL teacher asked him to sequence events in the Christmas tale of the nutcracker, he drew detailed pictures of the fighting with the mouse king, of Clara surveying the gifts beneath the tree, and of Franz and friends breaking the nutcracker. He dropped his head and gave no reply when she asked why he had not written his responses. Perhaps Tsuneo, too introverted to take the risk of failing to correctly sequence the events in English, felt that he could accomplish the assignment easily by illustrating his answers.

Maki and Ken, on the other hand, understood expectations, raised their hands to volunteer information, completed assignments in an accurate and timely fashion, and worked well in cooperative groups. As noted earlier, Maki frequently assumed leadership roles in her cooperative groups and enjoyed recognition for individual talent in music and expertise in *origami*. Because he understood expectations so well, Ken was assigned to sit beside a female student whose bizarre behavior had frequently disrupted the class. Intuitively, Ken understood expectations and was able to serve as a peer coach and to model exemplary behavior.

Although it may have had positive impact upon acculturation if students understood educational expectations, it appears that this factor was only moderately important on the continuum. The two of the four *kaigaishijo* who had experienced only American education provide the normative model for comparing the other two. Tsuneo

had been schooled in America long enough to understand expectations but seemed unwilling to risk failure and feigned ignorance of or inability to understand what was expected of him. Yoko, understanding little of expectations within the American classroom, drew upon previous knowledge from her Japanese education and her ingenuity to ascertain expectations. Consequently, it appears that other factors may have more impact on acculturation than understanding educational expectations.

Family value of education. To a certain extent, the value the family places on education in general appears to impact progress toward acculturation. Ken's parents, both of whom are university graduates, value education. His mother, a certified teacher who had formerly taught in Japan, volunteered her time on a weekly basis as the test administrator at the Japanese Saturday school attended by all four *kaigaishijo*. Ken's father planned educational trips for his family during school holidays. Ken's grandfather placed such a high value on education that he brought Japanese books instead of toys to his grandson.

Both of Maki's parents also are university graduates and value education. Her father taught various sports to his children and took them on nature excursions. He also directed the family's museum trips to the nation's capital. Maki's mother values education to such an extent that she not only assisted her daughter with homework assignments and special projects but also shared her culture with American students through Japanese clothing and craft demonstrations.

Yoko's parents demonstrated through their support of their daughter's academic endeavors and extracurricular activities the importance they placed on education. Their

active involvement modeled appropriate behavior for the child and reinforced the value of taking advantage of academic opportunities within the American public school classroom as well as through extracurricular learning activities.

Tsuneo's parents, on the other hand, appeared to feel that their son's education was the responsibility of the school and thus divorced any accountability from the family and from the boy. Neither parent is a university graduate, which may be related to their attitude toward education. Tsuneo's father told a teacher during a conference that his son had no problems with his education; rather, the teacher was not performing her job well. The father's negative attitude was also believed by other teachers who had taught Tsuneo to hamper his son's progress toward acculturation. It appeared that Tsuneo's father may have had a negative perception of American education. His daughter also wondered about her father's general disdain for American female educators. He told one of Marika's teachers that she was too outspoken and opinionated. When the researcher appeared at Japanese Saturday school while Tsuneo's father served as principal, he was skeptical of her ability to capture the spirit of the school through photography. From all accounts, the only educator to report an ability to establish a rapport and to congenially converse with Tsuneo's father was the male teacher who taught the boy in third grade.

Families appear to have either considered education to be a positive endeavor, one for which the child and the parents needed to make a commitment and reasonable exertion, or they appear to believe that the child's education was the responsibility of the school and the individual teachers. The former attitude certainly assisted the child in adapting to the school norms. The latter may have enabled the child to resist any

assistance that the teachers might have provided since no blame or shame rested with the child. While moderately important to the process of acculturation, an approving familial attitude toward the American school and its teachers may be also directly related to the family's receptive attitude toward the host culture, a factor yet to be addressed.

Artistic endeavors. "Our education system favors students that can process linearly, take in information auditorially,...look at the teacher, and restate pieces of information in a logical, linear fashion" (Hannaford, 1995, p. 185). Children who are able to sit quietly in classrooms, listen attentively to and understand the teacher, and respond logically--either linguistically or mathematically--tend to be rewarded. Most teaching and testing reflect linguistic and logical abilities (Hannaford, 1995). Gardner (1983) has observed that this kind of bias frequently ignores other intelligences, including interpersonal, intrapersonal, musical, kinesthetic, and visual/spatial abilities. Gestalt--meaning global or whole picture as opposed to specific and linear--processing that deals with images, emotion, and intuition (Kolb, 1984) is valued very little in our American system of education. Further, our literacy system is not based on ideographic elements that encourage the use of spatial abilities (Gardner, Hatch, & Torff, 1997). What happens then to the child who possesses such attributes and abilities? Unresolved stress experienced by a dominantly spatial child who is forced to perform in a logical, linguistic, and linear manner inhibits memory and learning (Hannaford, 1995). "Early interventions can have a significant positive impact in directing children's nascent abilities to comprehend and use spatial representations in culturally approved ways" (Gardner et al., 1997, p. 260). Yet, today's teachers are clearly unprepared to meet the

needs of spatial learners since generally they have been trained in the linear system of education.

Tsuneo never appeared to feel comfortable in any classroom situation. According to his teachers, he is a spatial learner whose learning style does not fit the linear structures he encountered in his classrooms. However, not until fifth grade was he given the opportunity to use his ability constructively. In fact, one of his teachers, apparently frustrated that an intelligent boy refused to meet classroom expectations, punished Tsuneo by taking away his art materials. Introverted by nature, Tsuneo coped within the cultural context in which he found himself through withdrawal into his private refuge. He retreated into his artistic domain as early as second grade when he was neither able to understand nor figure out expectations.

Outgoing Yoko, on the other hand, used her somewhat limited spatial strengths compared to Tsuneo's extraordinary ability, to facilitate understandings between herself, her teachers, and even her friends. While it is impossible in this survey to study the complex aspects of spatial development, it appears from the comparisons among the children that artistic endeavors are moderately important on the continuum toward complete acculturation. Tsuneo's teachers, unfortunately, understood too little about spatial intelligence to build upon his predisposition.

Personality. As originally conceived, this is a study of culture and personality. Through my observations of emerging patterns, I concluded that only two of the nine factors appeared to greatly impact progress on the continuum toward acculturation. First, the child's personality with all of its traits and attributes appears to have as great an

impact upon the process as the second factor, related to personality, a receptive attitude toward the host culture.

Although limited evidence emerges from these case studies since I did not conduct psychological testing or deliberately observe the children with this phenomenon in mind, the personality traits of introversion and extroversion appear to impact the process of acculturation. Extroversion and introversion are “considered the most stable personality traits that differentiate people from each other and that can be reliably measured” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, p. 65). However, trait theory can predict behavior “with only moderate accuracy because actions are not always consistent from situation to situation” (Plotnik & Mollenauer, 1986, p. 425). Further, “creative individuals seem to express both traits [introversion and extroversion] at the same time” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, p. 65).

Three of the four *kaigaishijo* appeared to acculturate quite easily. Maki, Ken, and Yoko all possess extroverted personalities. For example, Yoko and Ken appeared to be curious, questioning, always looking at problems in different ways, and apparently never feeling ill at ease in any situation in which they found themselves. Yoko frequently pointed to, picked up, or drew objects in her quest to understand. Ken appeared to be able to interact well with most children and even to logically predict the reactions of and to determine the appropriate responses to at least one rather unpredictable student in his class. He was never reticent to pursue a logical line of thinking in ESL class nor to express divergent thoughts that came to mind. Maki, confident and outgoing, assumed leadership responsibilities within cooperative groups and demonstrated Japanese crafts.

The personality of the fourth *kaigaishijo* appears to have impeded his acculturation. Tsuneo's predicament seemed terribly complex. Naturally shy, introverted, spatially intelligent, Tsuneo, at the time of my observations, did not have within himself the moderate risk-taking tendencies, the open attitude toward American culture, or the ability to think divergently despite his superior artistic ability. He reacted to ambiguity by retreating into his own world of art. He became frustrated and angry when he could not do what he wanted to do. Caught in a web not all of his own making, he retreated further into his world of art in fourth grade, until he appeared to be alienated to others. The state of alienation, as described by Horney (1991), is characterized by a lack of self-confidence, a disturbance in relationships with others, and a loss of identity.

If children are primed toward boldness or timidity (Goleman, 1995) and personality is stable across cultures (Cummins & Swain, 1986), then can students who exhibit the trait of introversion be helped to understand their personalities, abilities, and learning styles? Early childhood experiences "have a profound impact on temperament, either amplifying or muting an innate predisposition" (Goleman, 1995, p. 221). Can a student like Tsuneo, shy by temperament, learn to prize and use his own strengths to permit the acculturation process to proceed? "For the timid child, what matters at the outset is how they are treated by their parents, and so how they learn to handle their natural timidness" (Goleman, 1995, p. 221). Hence, Tsuneo's mother, who continued to shy away from moderate risk-taking experiences herself, set that example for her son who, by nature, was also a shy individual. Tsuneo's mother was too shy to videotape an ESL presentation and the festival dancing in which her son participated, albeit reluctantly.

She handed over the camcorder to Maki's mother to capture both events. Tsuneo's father's reluctance to view American education as a positive endeavor may have set that example for his son. The boy never received the encouragement he needed from his parents. His fifth-grade teacher apparently was the first person to confirm his talents and abilities. That teacher's affirmations apparently encouraged Tsuneo to engage in some classroom activities that appealed to him. For example, he appeared to use spatial abilities for a social studies game that required visual skill and a good memory. He scored well on map tests of states and capitals and was praised for his outstanding work. Therefore, some progress toward acculturation was noted in the final semester before Tsuneo's departure.

Judged by his extraordinary artistic ability, Tsuneo appeared to be talented and spatially intelligent. Unlike Yoko, however, Tsuneo neither used his extraordinary ability to communicate with others nor to foster relationships. In the classroom, Tsuneo seemed always at a loss for words; his diffident nature may have prevented him from taking risks of a verbal nature. The stress he experienced when pressed to perform verbally may have impaired his second-language facility. He was the most awkward and uncomfortable of the four *kaigaishijo*. Only in the final weeks before his departure did he begin to interact with Maki -- he may have no longer had anything to lose since his time in America was limited. Tsuneo's introversion appears to have blocked his capacity to acculturate. Yoko, Ken, and Maki, none of whom possessed spatial strengths to the same degree as Tsuneo, presented themselves not only as confident but also as extroverted children within the school and social environment.

My observations and interviews convinced me that factors other than language are involved in this process and that acculturation is quite complex. My conclusions are supported by the findings of Cummins and Swain (1986): that personality, background, and cognition impact interactional style. Attributes that remain stable across cultures include cognition and personality (Cummins & Swain, 1989). Interactional style may be a manifestation of personality attributes (Cummins & Swain, 1989).

If my data are accurate, interactional style appears to have the greatest impact of all factors on acculturation. Tsuneo, by all accounts, appeared to be introverted. He raised his hand only once to speak in class. He demonstrated through his journal writing, however, that he understood quite a lot about English, yet he refused to or could not speak more than a few words at a time. His refusal to interact with members of the host country impeded the acculturation process. Marika, Tsuneo's sister, explained her personal theory of acculturating. She thought it had to do with social interaction: "If you're like introvert, [acculturation] might take you a long time. For me, fortunately, I really love to hang out and socialize and was more outgoing, so I learned quickly." Assuming that the research is accurate, certain personality attributes that extroverted children exhibit, such as moderate risk-taking, the openness to new experiences, divergent thinking, and tolerance for ambiguity may ease the difficulty of acculturation.

Ken, Maki, and Yoko took risks as they engaged in school activities. Their journal entries indicated that they enjoyed new experiences. Yoko, initially excited about living in America, experienced a brief period akin to the negative state of culture shock (Furnham, 1988) when she entered fourth grade. Her father explained in a note to the

teacher that Yoko frequently cried because she could not always understand what was happening in the classroom. Although Yoko's third-grade euphoria was somewhat dampened by the more stringent demands of fourth grade, she never appeared to experience marginality (Stonequist, 1961; Goodman, 1994), alienation (Horney, 1991), or withdrawal (Oberg, 1960). An innovative student who was not as artistically talented as Tsuneo, Yoko, who had few words in her vocabulary to explain her Halloween excitement, filled pages of her journal with drawings of costumes that she and her sisters wore. An extroverted child who smiled, gestured, drew pictures, and attempted to communicate, Yoko employed divergent means of expression before she could use the target language.

I suggest that the child's personality, whether s/he is introverted or extroverted, significantly impacts the acculturation process. The child's personality can change over time with the right experiences as Goleman's (1995) research appears to confirm. "Our emotional capacities are not a given; with the right learning, they can be improved" (Goleman, 1995, p. 224). Therefore, teachers and parents must recognize that introverted children perhaps have more difficulty acculturating than extroverted children. The issue, however, is not that the introvert needs to change. Parents and educators have some responsibility to find ways to assist introverted students, especially those from another culture. How unnecessary I believe it is that *kaigaishijo* should struggle and perhaps be put back a grade when they return to school in Japan. Whether through art, through encouragement in leadership, or any other kind of participation, students' strengths must be recognized and utilized both by parents and culturally-sensitive teachers if children are

to succeed in the environment in which they are placed. Shy children also need to understand that introversion is not a negative aspect of personality.

Everyone is apparently comfortable with a certain degree of expressiveness. In fact Keirsey (1998) prefers to describe the extrovert as “expressive” and the introvert as “reserved.” He explains that the expressive person can be thought of as outgoing or socially gregarious. On the other hand, the reserved person, who seems to be more comfortable alone, is usually described as retiring and socially seclusive (Keirsey, 1998) or a person of intrapersonal strengths (Armstrong, 1994). Personality attributes, for the purposes of this study, are considered neither negative nor positive. Tsuneo, unlike the other three, fits the profile of the shy, retiring, introverted child who is spatially gifted and appears to be intrapersonally intelligent. Taking into account the complexity of the situation, it is extremely difficult to explain with certainty that Tsuneo’s personality prevented his progress on the continuum toward acculturation. Through my comparisons with the other children, however, it appears that Tsuneo’s introversion made it more difficult for him to acculturate.

A receptive attitude. “In our social interactions we make inferences about ourselves as well as others. We perceive how others react to us and incorporate these perceptions into our concept of self” (Small, 1990, p. 445). A receptive attitude toward the host culture appears to accelerate the process of acculturation. Ken, Maki, and Yoko all appeared to be enthusiastic about their experience of living and going to school in America. All three were well received in their classrooms. Yoko responded particularly well to any overtures of friendship and interacted spontaneously and enthusiastically with

students and teachers alike. The enthusiasm did not spring whole cloth from the children though. Each of the families took advantage of local activities and opportunities such as the Halloween trick-or-treat festivities and neighborhood pot luck dinner gatherings; they also traveled to Washington, D.C., and other historic and vacation areas within the United States.

Tsuneo's experience in the United States appears to stem in part from the detached or reluctant attitude toward adaptation fostered by his parents. The family obviously enjoyed material comforts in the United States that they were unable to afford in Japan, but did not seem to make an effort to appreciate their locale or the society. They made no effort to visit American holiday or historical sites. The family did, however, fly to Cancun, Mexico, to vacation during the summer of 1997, as Tsuneo's father pointed out to me during a visit to the Japanese Saturday school. On a local level, according to the accounts of Tsuneo's sister, his mother, and the ESL teacher who took a set of encyclopedias to their home, the family had no neighborhood friends.

The family's reluctance to acculturate or its desire to maintain their Japanese customs undoubtedly stem from a number of factors. Tsuneo's father appeared to maintain his cultural norms. Many Japanese men think women "are capable of performing only in areas related to what is known as women's *daidokoro kankaku* (housekeeper's instinct) - that is, household affairs, child care, education, health and welfare, environment" (Iwao, 1993, p. 214). Cooking, according to Tsuneo and his sister, was their mother's greatest talent. Another factor was the mother's lack of fluency in English. She was too shy to take the risk involved in making friends in the

neighborhood. Tsuneo's father spoke condescendingly to female teachers when it was necessary for him to participate in his son's educational experience. When their father was not playing weekend golf with company employees, Marika told me he indulged in expensive deep sea fishing excursions, shopped for fashionable clothing, or attended sports car shows. Likewise, Tsuneo never attempted nor desired to make friends with American children, according to one teacher's observations. His journal entries indicated that the boy preferred solitary activities, which would be consistent with his introversion and intrapersonal strengths as well as his father's role modeling. He did begin to communicate with Maki when they walked together from the bus or when she sat near him in the cafeteria during their final semester in the school, but since she is Japanese, she would have provided a safe cultural net for him. Despite an attitude that may have been similar to his father's, Tsuneo finally made some progress toward acculturation by the time his family departed in December for Japan. Tsuneo's sister seems to be the one exception that proves the rule. Despite the reluctance or detachment of her family to the larger American world, she deliberately chose to learn as much as she could from her experience, but she decided to acculturate on her own.

In summary, the two factors that appear to have affected acculturation most positively for these four children include personality and a receptive attitude toward the host culture. Three of the four *kaigaishijo*, those with extroverted personalities who appeared to be receptive to the learning opportunities offered in the host culture, progressed rather automatically toward the goal of acculturation. Two of the three, in fact, appeared to have completely acculturated and the third was progressing rapidly.

Only one of the four, the introverted male who seemed reluctant to adapt to the host culture, made little progress toward acculturation until his final semester.

On the other hand, the mother's role, an understanding of educational expectations, the value the family places on education, and the child's artistic endeavors appear to assist each student's acculturation, but in a tangential manner. For example, two of the four mothers appeared to be dedicated to their children's educational endeavors; one mother, without English skills, also tried to be as supportive as possible of her daughter's schooling; the fourth mother was not involved in her children's educational experiences. Yet, her teen-aged daughter, of her own volition, acculturated while her son appeared to experience great difficulty.

Finally, length of residency, acquisition of the target language, and clothing do not appear to make too much difference one way or the other. The child, for instance, who had lived in the United States for the least amount of time, who understood little of the target language, and who wore Japanese clothing, nevertheless was making rapid progress on the continuum toward complete acculturation.

Although some of the factors are external to the child and represent factors over which s/he has little control, others are internal and may possibly be modified with help from the school and family. Indeed, *kaigaishijo* have no control over their length of residency, but this factor appears not to significantly impact acculturation anyway. However, the attitude toward the host culture which a child internalizes can be positively directed. School personnel must welcome the cross-cultural child and be cognizant of cultural differences that may hinder the acculturative progress.

States and Phases of Acculturation

Acculturation is not an easy process for many people. Adapting to an entirely new culture in which most everything is foreign is disorienting and intimidating, takes patience, and requires risk-taking. The process appears to be composed of both *positive phases*, in which people advance in their understanding of the new social and cultural requirements, and *negative states*, in which they revert to the safety of their primary culture, delay further adaptation, or withdraw from social interaction as much as possible. The negative states (see figure 5.2) include culture shock (Furnham, 1988), marginality (Stonequist, 1961; Goodman, 1994), alienation (Horney, 1991), and withdrawal (Oberg, 1960).

Phases of acculturation

| Negative states | Positive phases |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Culture shock (Furnham, 1988) | Adjustment (Furnham, 1988) |
| Marginality (Stonequist, 1961; Goodman, 1994) | Accommodation (Sung, 1987) |
| Alienation (Horney, 1991) | Adaptivity (Hess & Azuma, 1991) |
| Withdrawal (Oberg, 1960) | Congruency (Clayton, 1996) |

Figure 5.2. Negative states and positive phases of the acculturation process environment.

Given the stories of these children, it appears that a child may not experience all negative states of the process but may, for example, experience only one negative state followed by three positive phases of the process. As noted previously, Yoko's reaction

upon entering fourth grade, when she realized that she had forgotten any English she had learned the previous spring, was similar to culture shock. Her response, however, was not to withdraw. The experience, coupled with Yoko's extroverted personality, apparently enabled her to adjust to her new environment.

On the other hand, the positive phases a child appears to experience as s/he progresses along the continuum toward complete acculturation seem to follow a pattern: adjustment to (Furnham, 1988), accommodation to (Sung, 1987), adaptivity to (Hess & Azuma, 1991), and congruency between (Clayton, 1996) the two cultures. Yoko was apparently experiencing the adaptive phase by December of fourth grade. By then she was sporting clothing like the American girls wore. She understood most assignments and attempted to do all of them. Both her written and oral expression had improved significantly. She was possibly not too far from attaining a comfortable congruency between the two cultures by early March, 1998. Ken and Maki appeared to have attained a comfortable congruency between the two cultures. Education was important to Ken's, Maki's, and Yoko's families and all three children took advantage of American educational opportunities. Tsuneo, meanwhile, appeared only to be entering the adjustment phase of acculturation in the fourth year of his second sojourn in the United States. His fifth grade teacher's understanding of his personality and learning styles, coupled with the budding friendship with another Japanese student, undoubtedly assisted in making the positive turn toward acculturation.

My study suggests that the *kaigaishijo* who tended to be extroverted or expressive and displayed receptive attitudes toward the host culture were more likely to experience

the positive phases of acculturation leading to a comfortable congruency between their native culture and the host culture. The one child, described as shy and introverted, who did not appear to be receptive to American culture apparently experienced the negative states of acculturation that included marginality, alienation, and withdrawal which was, in his case, a retreat into the artistic domain consistent with his spatial and intrapersonal intelligences. Only in his final semester at the intermediate school did the boy enter the positive phase of adjustment, the initial step on the continuum toward acculturation.

Our Responsibility

Although we are closer to a model of the complex process of acculturation, it is clear that such a model will have to consider the role of the school as it impacts the process as well as the demands upon the parents. What is the responsibility of the school system and its personnel to these students? If *kaigaishijo* are to succeed within the host culture, what must their parents understand? A receptive demeanor by parents models a positive attitude toward the host culture for the children. If the parents take advantage of the experience of living in the host culture as a positive one, by and large their children are likely to do the same. Likewise, when a family values education and the educational experience, whether in Japan or America, the child tends to be successful in school. A well-informed faculty can make every effort to ensure a smooth transition for the cross-cultural student. Teachers who understand diverse learning styles, including spatial intelligence, and teach to the various modalities, advance the learning of all children, including cross-cultural students. The suggestions that follow point to some of the practical means schools can employ to facilitate the acculturation process and thereby

enable the cross-cultural students to gain more from their educational experiences in this country.

First, it is incumbent upon administrators and educators to adopt a philosophy that acknowledges differences. Educators' misunderstandings of cultural predispositions can place *kaigaishijo*, and other cross-cultural students, at risk. "It is culture that forms us; without culture there would be no identity at all" (Sarup, 1996, p. 183). We must have some understanding of differing cultural perspectives. As Geertz (1983) reminds us, some familiarity with the social sciences in general, interpretive anthropology in particular, provides a rubric for making the incommensurable somewhat less enigmatic. A multicultural philosophy that respects difference and diversity, dispels myths, stereotypes, and prejudices is the egalitarian position public schools must adopt. If the school, through its faculty, administrators, parents, and community members, adopts such a philosophy, then it must act accordingly. The faculty and administrators, in particular, who espouse a democratic social order ought to spend time discussing what that means in practical terms. Instead of denying diversity, the school that operates under the multicultural umbrella can move beyond differences that separate persons of various cultures and ethnic backgrounds to focus on the needs of the individual students.

Next, the school must determine correct placement for *kaigaishijo* based on evidence. If English is the student's second language, that student should be provided a nonverbal assessment free of cultural bias. A number of nonverbal assessments appropriate for ESL or bilingual students are available commercially and can be administered by a teacher to individual students or groups within a time span of

approximately 30 minutes. The Ravens Progressive Matrices (RPM) is one instrument for identifying “academic talent and potential in culturally and linguistically diverse students” (Mills & Tissot, 1995, p. 209). Such tests are ability measures rather than achievement assessments. Testing results, coupled with previous school records and any information provided by the student’s parents, can make placement more purposive and less haphazard. RPM results may provide teachers with an indication of a child’s potential that, in turn, would need to be developed through appropriate educational experiences. Because a child may have difficulty speaking, reading, and writing the target language of the host country, s/he is not learning-impaired. In fact, some of the strengths *kaigaishijo* demonstrate, such as divergent thinking, extraordinary artistic ability, and tolerance for ambiguity, may be indicators of creativity, maturity, and progress toward acculturation. Nonverbal testing, free of cultural bias, could be used to more accurately identify some second-language learners’ strengths and abilities.

Third, the school should place *kaigaishijo* with a teacher cognizant of cultural differences and, preferably, experienced in teaching cross-cultural students. In lieu of services of bicultural teachers, schools must broaden awareness of different cultural perspectives through continuous staff training. Tsuneo’s fourth-grade teacher was the only educator of the nine on her grade level who offered to teach *kaigaishijo*. Her only knowledge of cultural differences in general and Japanese students in particular had been gleaned from a single book she had read in order to write a paper for a college course. The intermediate school, in fact, has had no faculty member in its employ knowledgeable of the needs of Japanese students in the seven years that the school has existed.

Staff development is a strategy for instructional change as well as a means to develop schools as collaborative workplaces (Fullan, 1991). If the culture of school is to become receptive to change, then the teachers at the intermediate school must be cognizant of the special needs of *kaigaishijo* and other cross-cultural students. In turn, they can implement approaches to facilitate the acculturation process. Continuous staff development, based on insights gleaned from this research and teacher testimonials, would undoubtedly raise consciousness levels leading to improved educational practices.

As the fourth criterion for a successful school program to assist students on the continuum toward acculturation, all ESL teachers should be trained, certified, and experienced in their field. The position should be a contracted one to ensure stability for the teacher and continuity for the ESL students. Unlike other teachers, the ESL teacher currently signs no contract and works for an hourly wage without health insurance, sick leave, or any benefits offered other employees. I agree with Clayton (1996) that the ESL teacher is expected to deliver expert instruction in English as a second language to students who need that linguistic support. For one who is expected to teach English and also serve as a culture broker, the criteria for hiring is often compromised.

The fifth criterion for successful acculturation entails open communication between parents and teachers. Teachers must clearly explain homework expectations and class participation requirements to parents of cross-cultural students. Parents, in turn, can assist teachers in individualizing assignments by sharing information about their child's social and emotional behaviors and personality tendencies as well as previous academic performance. If parents understand expectations, then they can encourage and assist their

children at home. Teachers, in turn, can help the parents of *kaigaishijo* understand that the school is not about the business of assimilation; rather, educators will join with parents to make the experience of acculturation a good one for students.

Finally, the best way to ensure a smooth transition for *kaigaishijo*, or other cross-cultural students, is to set the stage for success from the beginning. Not only is this the responsibility of the school but also of the ESL supervisor. The supervisor should be instrumental in planning an annual orientation for parents and teachers of *kaigaishijo* and any other students whose second language is English. Depending upon the numbers involved, the orientation could be a gathering of participants around a conference table to share information about cultural perspectives and educational expectations. When students transfer into the system at other times of the year, which is often the case with *kaigaishijo* from a different school calendar year, the ESL supervisor can immediately conference with individual families to ensure a smooth transition.

Recommendations for Further Research

Diverse populations are characteristic of postmodern society. The adoption of an educational policy that celebrates diversity liberates all students and encourages understanding across cultures. A multicultural approach to education benefits students and educators alike because it introduces a sense of cultural relativism into the mainstream (Nieto, 1992; Sleeter & Grant, 1987; Thompson & Sangeeta, 1993). It is an approach “that searches for equity for all students, that seeks to educate all learners in decision making and problem solving skills, that validates all heritages” (Clayton, 1996, p. 131). *Kaigaishijo* and their families are frequently caught between the optimism and

individual freedom of American culture and the practicality and communal harmony of traditional Japanese culture (Wang, 1997). Acknowledging differences paves the way to understanding. If educators are trained to recognize the aspects, states, and phases of the complex process of acculturation, then they can approach with professional competence the task of ensuring a comfortable transition for *kaigaishijo*.

Within a democracy, all children, including involuntary minorities and sojourners, should be provided the opportunity to succeed. Parents of *kaigaishijo*, as residents of and taxpayers to the Commonwealth who cannot be discriminated against under the federal Constitution, have the right to send their children to public schools. The companies that employ the Japanese businessmen who bring their families temporarily to America also contribute their share of tax dollars to public education. The common goal of educators and parents alike should be to facilitate the acculturation process in the student's best interests within a multicultural setting.

The diaspora in which *kaigaishijo* are engaged will not evaporate. These children are the vanguard of the future, the cosmopolites of the next century. Their "identity has been profoundly shaped by the dynamics of the public/private split...that [in turn] has been shaped by the history of the twentieth-century capitalism" (Zaretsky, 1994, p. 213). They are quite probably the cosmopolitans of the next century whose flexible personalities and attitudes receptive to new experiences will enable them to acculturate wherever the globalization of business places them. The educational and acculturational experiences of involuntary immigrants from cultures other than Japan should be studied to determine if the factors found in this study are consistent across cultural boundaries.

This study suggests that staff development within the school environment needs to be improved if the expectation is complete acculturation for *kaigaishijo*. Not only does it demonstrate that ethnographic research is a viable method for gaining insight into a complex phenomenon, but also provides a better understanding of and direction to solve a problem. New knowledge increases responsibility. Therefore, further research on teachers--what they know, what they want to know, and what they need to know--about teaching diverse student populations accordingly is required. Similar studies of other sojourning or involuntary minority populations could contribute additional insights into and suggest other factors that impact the acculturation process.

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The College Of
WILLIAM & MARY

School of Education
Human Subjects Review Committee
Post Office Box 8795
Williamsburg, Virginia 23187-8795

Thomas J. Ward, Jr.
Chair
757/221-2358

To: Dorothy Finnegan

Date: June 5, 1997

Subject: Research proposal from Linda Harkins

We have reviewed the research proposal from Linda Harkins and have determined that she may proceed with her study. 1 Since this research involves interviews concerning educational experiences which do not violate the restrictions of Federal or State guidelines for exemption, it falls into the exempt category and is excepted from further review.

If there are any changes in methodology which effect how human subjects will be used in this research, please contact me immediately.

CC: Wendy Pearson, Enrollment/Student Services

Appendix B

**Research Project conducted by Linda F. Harkins
Office telephone: (757)482-4405**

**College of William and Mary Dissertation Advisor: Dr. Dorothy E. Finnegan
Office telephone: (757)221-2346
Office FAX: (757)221-2988**

INFORMATION TO PARENTS OF SELECTED PARTICIPANTS

I am interested in exploring the acculturation process, or adaptation to American culture, that Japanese students attending public school in America experience. The willingness of educators to become more knowledgeable about this process ensures a positive atmosphere conducive to cross-cultural understandings and promotes easier and more successful transitions for students entering American public school from Japan.

The United States of America continues to attract Japanese industry to areas in which the American residents have never before encountered Asian culture.

Demographic changes within formerly homogeneous school communities require cooperation between educators and Japanese families. To facilitate cooperation among peoples of diverse cultural backgrounds and to ensure academic and social progress for all children enrolled in public schools, an understanding of the acculturation process is tantamount to success.

The proximity of particular schools to available family housing and Japanese industry make the proposed study possible at the school where I am an administrator. Knowledge about the acculturation process is expected to emerge from interviews and observations conducted for purposes of this study. One case study involving Japanese students and their families is planned. Japanese students and families, building administrators, classroom teachers, and tutors for English as a second language (ESL) will be asked to participate in this study. Appropriate personnel, including the division superintendent, have been informed and permission has been granted for the actual study to proceed.

Confidentiality and anonymity are assured by the use of pseudonyms assigned to the participants. The site is referred to as an intermediate school. Neither college advisors nor the Human Subjects Research Committee of the School of Education of the College of William and Mary will permit any methodology that might be considered harmful or invasive to the study participants.

Participants will be encouraged to verbalize their feelings and opinions in responding to my questions. My research will not incorporate any form of testing or experimentation. No response will be considered correct or incorrect. Participants will be under no obligation to answer every question. Scheduled interview will not exceed one hour per interview of participants' time. I seek information from those people intimately involved with the acculturation process, including the Japanese students, their families, and their teachers. Participants families will be given copies of the interview questions and informed that some answers may lead to additional questions.

Before proceeding with the interview process, I will ask each parent to sign a consent form for the minor child or children to answer questions. Parents will be informed that participation is voluntary and that they may withdraw their children from the study at any time. I will request permission for audio taping interviews with the understanding of the participants that such taping is done for clarification rather than for evaluative purposes.

In my capacity as a school administrator, I periodically observe classroom activities as part of routine job expectations. Classes to which Japanese students are assigned will not be interrupted by my presence. By observing the social behavior, language processing, and general cognitive strategies that Japanese students appear to follow, I will look for patterns in the acculturation process as I observe students in classroom settings.

Social behavior, for the purposes of this study, includes the many ways students interact and communicate. As the Japanese students acquire their second language, their communication skills could conceivably take the form of eye contact, bodily movements, or mimicking others in the classroom. Personality traits should also emerge as part of social behavior.

Language processing involves social contact as the Japanese students discover functions and structures inherent in the English language. As the Japanese students actually use the target language, their experiences will be compared to determine emergent patterns.

Finally, general cognitive strategies in which students engage result in comprehending and acquiring rules inherent in the language. The language acquisition device (LAD) cannot be specifically observed (Chomsky, 1965, 1975), but aspects of it in the form of social behavior, language processes, and personality characteristics are expected to emerge.

Appendix C

Research Project to be conducted by Linda F. Harkins

The College of William and Mary

PARENT CONSENT FORM

As parent of _____ ,

I, the undersigned, understand the information regarding research proposed by Linda F. Harkins, a doctoral student at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. I consent for my child to be interviewed by Mrs. Harkins with the understanding that I may also be present. I understand that Mrs. Harkins will protect my rights and those of my child to confidentiality and privacy through pseudonyms assigned to sites and participants I understand that participation is voluntary and that my child is under no obligation to answer every question. I also understand that I may withdraw my minor child from this study at any time.

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____

Linda F. Harkins

Appendix D

STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Language Acquisition and Communication

1. When did you arrive in America and how much English did you know at that time?
2. In what grade are you currently enrolled and how old are you?
3. Could you understand the teacher in your regular classroom when you arrived? How did you feel when you were unable to understand? What did you do when you could not understand the teacher?
4. How helpful was the one hour of private daily instruction with the ESL teacher? Are you currently enrolled in ESL?
5. Tell me about additional tutoring you may receive.
6. Do you speak English or Japanese at home and why? Does it make a difference to whom you are speaking? Do you speak Japanese or English to your father? Do you speak Japanese or English to your mother? Do you talk differently to them than you do to your friends? Can you give me examples?
7. What things do you notice in your home that may be different now than when you first arrived? Where, when, and how did you get those things? (e.g., meals, furniture, holiday decorations, etc.)
8. Do you play with American friends? Tell me about those times.

9. If you attend Japanese Saturday school, tell me about what it is like for you.
10. What do you study at Japanese Saturday school?
11. Do you know what kinds of things the students in the international class at Saturday school learn? If so, would you be interested in learning those things, too?
12. Do you communicate in English or Japanese at Japanese Saturday school?
13. Tell me how you dress and what materials you take and how you carry them to Japanese Saturday school. Is this in any way different from how you prepare to attend American public school?
14. Which school, Japanese Saturday school or American public school, do you find harder? Can you explain why?
15. Are the teachers in Japanese Saturday school different from the teachers in American public school? How are they different?
16. Do you prefer one school over the other? Why?
17. Do you write letters to any relatives or friends in Japan or America? What do you write about and which language do you use?
18. When you are in American school, in which language do you think? When you are in Japanese Saturday school, in which language do you think? When you are at home, in which language do you think? When you are playing, in which language do you think?

Context and Social Networks

1. Tell me about the food you enjoy eating. What kind of lunch do you usually eat at school? Has this changed since you first came to America? Why?

2. Do you always sit with the same group of students at lunch? Can you give me the names of the students you most enjoy eating lunch with at school? Are any of them Japanese?
3. Do you have a close friend with whom you can share almost anything? Can you describe your friend and tell me why you like him/her?
4. Do you wear the same clothes you wore in Japan? Do you notice any differences between the way students dress in Japan and America? If you could wear what you want, what would that be?
5. Is the house you live in here approximately the same as your home in Japan? If you notice differences, can you tell me about them?
6. What do you think is the most difficult thing about living in America?
7. If your family gets together with other Japanese families in the area, describe those times for me.
8. Did anybody help your family when you arrived in America?
9. How would you feel if you learned you were going to return to Japan next month?
10. How would you feel if you knew you would stay in America until you graduate from high school?
11. Does anyone at home help you with your homework? Who? How? How long does it take?
12. Do you feel that you are more like your American friends or people you know in Japan?
13. Are there any differences between how you behave at home and how you act at

school?

- 14. Who explains to you situations that you do not understand if you are at school? Who explains expectations at home when you do not understand?**
- 15. How many children are in your family? Tell me their names and ages.**
- 16. Is there something you like most about America? Is there something you like most about Japan?**
- 17. Have you returned to Japan since you have lived in America? Why did you return? How did you feel?**
- 18. Do you behave differently in Japan than in America? How?**

Appendix E

STUDENT OBSERVATION FORMAT

Social Behavior

Social behavior includes methods of communication between teacher and student as well as between and among students within the context of the classroom as well as in an informal setting such as the school cafeteria. The following processes will be observed:

- how the Japanese student cooperates and communicates within a given social context
- how the Japanese student takes opportunities to use English
- how the Japanese student avoids/attracts attention
- how the Japanese student uses materials
- how the Japanese student accepts praise from teachers or students
- how the Japanese student accepts or avoids criticism
- how the Japanese student establishes patterns of interactions with teachers/students
- how the Japanese student follows established/informal rules

Language Processing

Language processing includes the students' attempts to use and understand English as well as the structures and functions inherent in language. I will observe how speakers

interact with learners to determine if the patterns established are

- simple
- redundant
- repetitive
- comprehensible to the learner
- misleading or confusing to the learner
- appropriate or inappropriate

I will observe the ways learners interact with speakers using the following communicative processes:

- greetings
- questions
- requests
- declarations
- slang/idioms/colloquialisms
- body language/visual cues

Audio taping may accompany certain observations to ensure that language usage is accurately recorded.

Vita

Linda F. Harkins

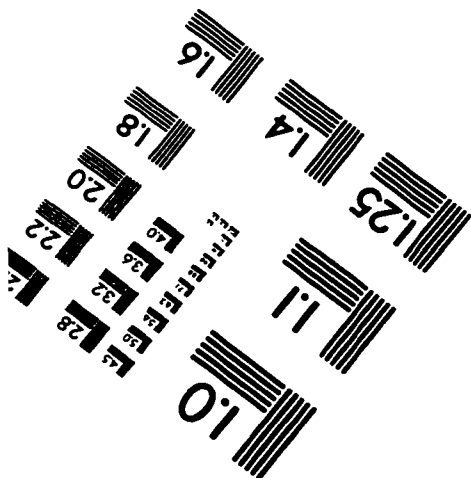
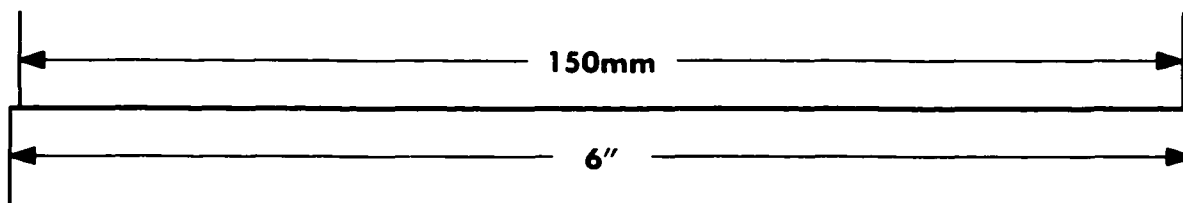
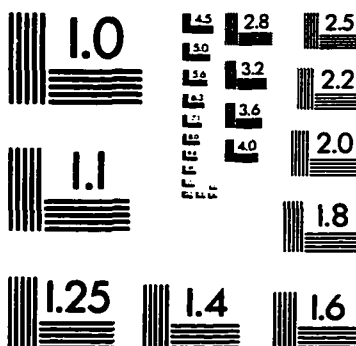
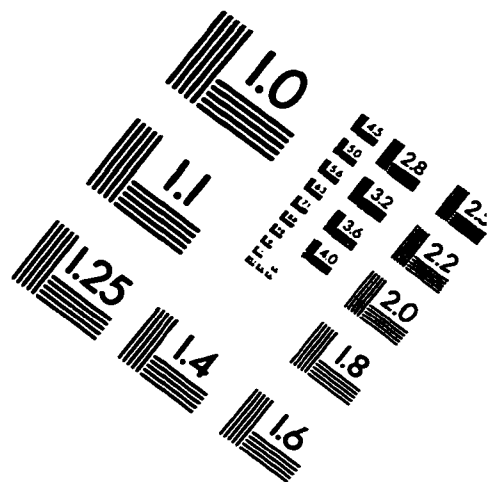
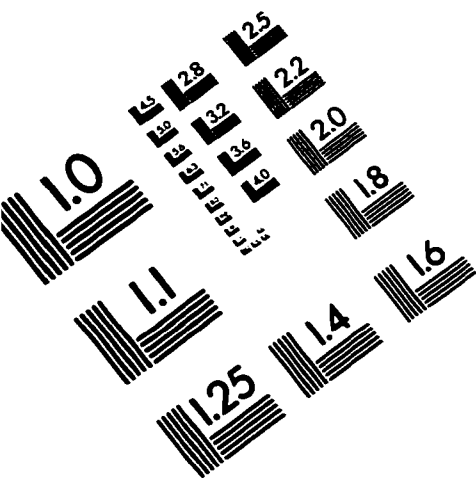
Education:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1993-1994 | The College of William and Mary Williamsburg, Virginia Educational Specialist Degree Advanced Graduate Degree |
| 1982-1984 | Old Dominion University Norfolk, Virginia Master of Science in Education Administration and Supervision |
| 1963-1967 | The College of William and Mary Williamsburg, Virginia Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts |

Professional experience:

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------|
| 1998- | Supervisor of gifted education |
| 1991-1998 | Assistant principal |
| 1976-1991 | Public school art teacher |

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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